It has been another incredible year of great experiences for all the faculty, staff and students in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. Our most important event was the successful awarding of tenure and promotion to Dr. Alfred Valdez. This is just the beginning of good things to come for other junior faculty as they go up for P&T in the future. We were awarded one of the coveted President Performance Awards for a new program in reading disabilities called, Read to Succeed. Besides being a first rate training program in this area of reading disabilities, this is the first truly cross-over program with SPED and CD where faculty from both programs are teaching in one area.

Go to [http://spedcd.education.nmsu.edu/](http://spedcd.education.nmsu.edu/) for more information on the dyslexia program and other departmental information.

We welcomed a new faculty member in the area of autism and assistive technology, Dr. Sathiyaprakash Ramdoss. He has proven to be a perfect fit for the department and to the community where he has become a devoted consumer of ChaChi’s Mexican food! We also are partnering with LCPS to train 20 teachers in the area of autism over the next three years. LCPS also is providing the financial resources for a bilingual speech-language pathologist/college assistant professor, Ms. Suky Estala, a prior CD grad, who works in the schools while supervising four NMSU graduate students. The year brought highlight after highlight with Dr. Rhein receiving her second million dollar grant CLASS for ALL NM for training bilingual speech-language pathologists. This was done in concert with the speech and hearing department at the University of New Mexico. You can read of the many faculty successes and activities in the newsletter.
Our students were also as successful as their faculty. SPED graduate student Morgan Hardin received the outstanding graduate student award from the alumni association for 2013. Morgan is a teacher in the LCPS system. CD undergraduate student, Leslie Guzman, received the Outstanding Senior Award this spring from the NMSU Alumni Association for the College of Education. We are excited about new international travel opportunities for students. This year 12 graduate students in CD are accompanied me to Lima, Peru as part of a Faculty Led International Program to provide clinical services. I hope this is the beginning of an increased number of faculty student international experiences.

Sandra Romero, the backbone of our department, was awarded the prestigious NMSU Above and Beyond Award this year. She was presented her plaque at the Board of Regents meeting by President Carruthers. It was a wonderful ceremony and we are so proud of her! Go to http://president.nmsu.edu/above-beyond-award/award-winners/ to read more.

Finally, the department was successful in receiving $72,000 of legislative funding for audiology equipment and AAC/Assistive Technology equipment, to be used for training both CD and SPED students. These purchases will provide state-of-the-art technology for labs which will be used in research and service to the community as well as to enrich the learning experiences of students in the department.

SPED/CD department continues to be a busy place where you will find faculty presenting their work around the country, feverishly working in their laboratories to meet journal deadlines, or burning the midnight oil as they prepare for their next lecture or grade exams. I am truly fortunate to lead this amazing group of staff, faculty and students. Every day I realize what a privilege and honor it is to be able to do the work I love. I want to thank all of our alums for your continued support through your return as adjunct instructors when we are in need, your donations and gifts which help us grow our programs, and your good wishes for our success!

We wish you the best. The coffee is always on. Please come by and say hello when you’re on campus.

Best regards,

Marlene
Meet the Faculty

Dr. Zhen Chai
Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Early childhood special education, early intervention, early literacy development, technology, and positive behavior support

Suky Estala
Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Ms. Estala holds a unique position which bridges the bilingual clinical programs at NMSU and Las Cruces Public Schools.
Dr. Kathleen Chinn
Associate Professor

Areas of Interest:
Deaf and hard of hearing education

Dr. Randa Keely
College Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Inclusion, high incidence disability, co-teaching, secondary special education
Dr. Loana Mason  
College Assistant Professor  
Visual Impairment Program Director

Areas of Interest:  
Use and development of best practices with learners who have visual impairments, including those with additional disabilities, attitudes about blindness and visual impairment, and literacy

Dr. Heike Lehnert-LeHouillier  
Assistant Professor

Areas of interest:  
Production and perception of spoken language, the use of ultrasound in speech production research as well as a bio-feedback device in articulation therapy, speech prosody, especially in individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, and voice disorders, especially in individuals with Parkinson's Disease
Amelia Medina Rau
College Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Spanish / Bilingual treatment issues in assessment and intervention

Margie Medina
College Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Preschool, school age and bilingual speech-language disorders
Dr. Srikanta Mishra
Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Funded grant, Medial efferent mechanisms in auditory processing disorders, Emerging Research Grant, Hearing Health Foundation

Dr. Karen Potter
College Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Assessment, inclusive practices, and services for students with moderate to severe support needs
Dr. Sathiyaprakash Ramdoss
Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Autism, Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), natural and synthetic speech perception, and application of technology for the rehabilitation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Dr. Deborah Rhein
Associate Department Head
Associate Professor

Areas of Interest:
Assessment and intervention of language differences and disorders as they relate to literacy development and school success, and fluency disorders
Dr. Loretta Salas
Associate Professor

Areas of Interest:
General special education, and multicultural/bilingual special education

Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance
Department Head
Associate Professor

Areas of Interest:
Cleft lip and palate, bilingual medical interpreter training, multicultural issues, speech production of young children with cleft palate
Dr. Linda Spencer  
CD Program Director  
Assistant Professor

Areas of Interest:
Examining the speech-language and literacy development of children with hearing loss and those who use cochlear implants

Tenecia Trammel-Yeboah  
College Assistant Professor  
Coordinator of Clinical Services

Areas of Interest:
Early childhood intervention, pediatric language and disorders, myofunctional therapy, and voice disorders
Dr. Alfred Valdez
Associate Professor

Areas of Interest:
Applying cognitive theories to educational technology, early language development/disorders, phonological development/disorders, and basic/advanced

TriUnity 2014

Undergraduate students ready to register attendees
Presenter Sylvia Diehl
TriUnity: 2014

The New Mexico State University Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders partnered with Aprendamos Intervention Team and Direct Therapy Services to host the Tri-Unity Conference Feb. 28 at the Corbett Center Auditorium. "Teaching Reading and Beyond: Addressing the Needs of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder" was the focus of this year's conference for NMSU's College of Education. For the past nine years, the Tri-Unity Conference has provided continuing education opportunities to educators, speech-language pathologists, early interventionists, NMSU students and families in the region. "This conference is important because it provides a quality conference by both local and national experts in their field," said Marlene Salas-Provance, Special Education and Communication Disorders department head. "The Tri-Unity Conference partnership has grown stronger due to our shared goals of delivering quality, state-of-the art education, which meets the needs of our community. Not only does the conference provide educational opportunities it also made a donation to the SPED / CD department. The topic this year combines autism and reading disabilities, two of the most important issues today in the education and treatment of children with disabilities." Sylvia Diehl was the featured speaker at the event. A nationally known speaker on autism spectrum disorders, Diehl is a faculty member at the University of South Florida in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department.

Original Article by Tiffany Acosta taken from NMSU College of Education Website

Bottom Left: Dean Morehead accepting $10,000 check from TriUnity Partners on behalf of the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center, Bottom Middle: Attendees registering, Bottom Right: Presenter Sylvia Diehl with Aprendamos CEO Abel Covarrubias, Dr. Spencer, and Dr. Salas-Provance
Welcoming New Students to the Department

New Doctoral Students
Enas Altaf, Seda Karayazi Ozsayin, and Najla Al-Ajmi
This academic year, the department played host to two undergraduate meet and greets—one in the fall, and one in the spring. During the fall, the inaugural Undergraduate Meet and Greet was held in Cole Conference Room. There were 46 undergraduate students over the two hours of the event. The students had opportunities to win door prizes, eat pizza, and meet the faculty and staff that makes up the CD department. We are hoping to hold the Meet and Greet each Fall semester as a way to keep up with the undergraduate students and thank them for their hard work and dedication to becoming future special educators, Speech-Language Pathologists or Audiologists. In April, the Undergraduate Meet and Greet was held in the Speech and Hearing Center. Close to 50 undergraduate students—from both Special Education and Communication Disorders—were in attendance. This provided students an opportunity to mingle and meet with professors outside the classroom environment. A dozen or so door prizes were awarded at the event—with one lucky winner receiving two pizzas delivered by our Department Head, Dr. Salas-Provance.
Special Education and Communication Disorders

Faculty Retreat 2014

From left to right top to bottom Dr. Salas-Provance, Dr. Ramdoss, Dr. Mason, Ms. Yeboah, Dr. Spencer, Ms. Medina, Dr. Chai, Dr. Valdez, Dr. Bae, Dr. Chai
As part of the U.S. Department of Education’s back-to-school bus tour, “Strong Start, Bright Future,” Michael Yudin, acting assistant secretary with the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, spent some time meeting with faculty and students at New Mexico State University’s Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders Sept. 10. Yudin joined in three panel discussions with faculty and students who are participating in programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Programs. NMSU’s Department of Special Education and Communications Disorders has received more than $4 million in grants for programs to prepare professionals skilled at working with multicultural and linguistically diverse clients. “We are proud to partner with the U.S. Department of Education’s special education office to deliver these important initiatives,” said NMSU President Garrey Carruthers. “Through this collection of programs, we are able to generate vital research, provide enhanced training for our public school professionals and better serve the diverse needs of students across the state.” The three grant programs include: Special Education Leaders for a Diverse Society (SLEDS), more than $1.2 million, a five-year project to produce leadership personnel with a dual focus on research and teaching aimed at the needs of multicultural students with disabilities in public schools; New Mexico: Preparing Autism Spectrum Specialists (NM-PASS), $950,000, a four-year program to prepare educators to use evidence-based practice to improve outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse children with Autism Spectrum Disorders; and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Speech-Language Services for All Language Learners & Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Speech-Language Services for All Language Learners in New Mexico (CLASS for ALL/CLASS for ALL-NM), two grants totaling more than $2 million, combined the two grants represent a 10-year project to train bilingual speech-language pathologists.
Communication Disorders Graduate Student Orientation 2013

The new cohort of graduate students in the communication disorders program (graduating May 2015) met prior to the fall semester in an orientation to the program. Speakers included interim dean of the graduate school, Louis Reyes; recent graduates of the program; second year graduate students; and professors of the communication disorders program. The new students had the opportunity to meet one another before classes began and were able to familiarize themselves with the clinic and the program. After the orientation students were invited to attend a welcome BBQ at Department Head Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance’s house.

Evidence Based Learning for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Dr. Spencer has been visiting the state of Ohio this past school year. She has been part of a group of 4 who presented a 1-day conference about Evidence-Based Learning for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students for the Ohio School for the deaf. In August the group presented in Columbus, in March they presented at Kent State and in April they presented at Cleveland University. The group includes her colleagues from around the country Marc Marschark, from the National Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, NY her co-investigator for an NIH Grant presented on Myths and Misunderstandings about Deafness. Susan Easterbrooks, the coordinator for Deaf Education at Georgia State, presented on Literacy and Evidence-Based Practice, and Mark Rosacia presented on Social and Emotional Functioning in Deaf Teenagers. Dr. Spencer's presentation was on Listening, Speaking and Phonology in Deaf Learners. Dr. Spencer stresses that opportunities such as this illustrates how important it is to have a network of colleagues with whom to work.
Tailgating with SERTOMA and the College of Education
Holiday Fun in the Office

Top left: Administrative assistant Norma Vasques and Graduate assistants Natalie Alvarex and Christina Newman
Top right: College of Education Holiday Door decorating contest, Administrative assistant Ashley Maki, Guille Hijar-Alvidrez, and Andrea Vasquez
Bottom left: Halloween with Dr. Salas-Provance, Ms. Yeboah, Ms. Maki
Bottom right: Clinical supervisor Adrienne Herrenbruk, Administrative assistant Ashley Maki, and Clinic Coordinator Tenecia Yeboah at the department holiday party
SPED Faculty and Students Attend the DADD 15th International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disability & Developmental Disabilities

A Huge Thank You to Sertoma

The Las Cruces Sertoma Club always has our back, and this year was no exception. In late November, the club presented Ms. Tenecia Yeboah, Director of Clinical Education and Dr. Linda Spencer, Program Director with a check for approximately $9000.00. Did you also know that our Clinic Van was the result of Sertoma generosity as well? These monies allow us to hire clinical educators during the summer session.

Alice Jones, Melinda Shane, Dr. Cronin
NIH Grant Supporting Research Aimed at Improving Education for Deaf Individuals

New Mexico State University’s Communication Disorders Program is partnering on a $2.3 million research project to pinpoint the types of teaching and services that will help deaf individuals in their educational pursuits.

Linda Spencer, program director of the Communication Disorders Program in NMSU’s College of Education, along with her students are analyzing data for the project that is funded by the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, part of the National Institutes of Health.

The four-year research project is a partnership with the Rochester Institute of Technology and the National Technical Institute of the Deaf’s Center for Research Partnerships. Data for the project that started in 2012 is being collected in Rochester, N.Y. and sent to Spencer for analysis in her Phonology, Hearing, Articulation, Language and Literacy Lab, where her students are learning to analyze speech production by doing sound by sound level transcription.

Spencer said it is a great opportunity for undergraduate volunteers who have had transcription coursework and for graduate students to increase their experience. “Their skills are being honed to listen and learn what is going on with the speech. Who knows what idea we are going to spark in a student,” she said.

The study is looking at three groups of college students – deaf students who wear cochlear implants, deaf students who do not use cochlear implants and students who have hearing. Cochlear implants are a device that provides direct electrical stimulation to the auditory or hearing nerve in the inner ear. The cochlear implant does not result in “restored” or “cured” hearing. It does, however, allow for the perception of the sensation of sound. Spencer said they are exploring how spoken language and sign language skills relate to and influence each other. They also are measuring verbal and nonverbal cognitive abilities and comparing how students learn from reading and from lectures that are spoken and/or signed.

“We’re hoping that by looking at the relationship between language and thinking in individuals who are deaf, we will get a better idea of how to teach those individuals,” she said. “We’re hoping what we learn can be instituted in their curriculum to achieve the highest level possible for these individuals.”

The research participants in Rochester come from all walks of life and are for perhaps the first time surrounded by other deaf individuals. Spencer said they will look at how mixing these types of students has impacted them.

Article by Julie M. Hughes

Picture: Dr. Linda Spencer with two undergraduate CD students
Calling All Alumni
2013 CD
Phone-a-thon

In December 2013, Communication Disorders undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty participated in a phone-a-thon. Phone calls were made to alumni to inquire about their careers and their time spent at NMSU. Donations were also collected to help fund scholarships and hire additional clinical educators for the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center. Participants dressed festively and spread holiday cheer.

Undergraduate students: Trevor Harris, Ali Rhodes, Lisseth Ruiz, Jessica Leuenberger, and Hannah Bocox

Graduate students: Christina Newman, Zully Garcia, and Nell Baird

Dr. Spencer and Dr. Salas-Provance
A group of SPED doctoral students and CD graduate students along with a few energetic faculty met on an early Saturday morning for a live web chat on the topic of international autism issues. The live chat brought together one speaker from China and one from Brazil for a very interesting session.
**Friends of CD 2013**

The annual Friends of CD event is held to recognize members of the community that support the Communication Disorders program at New Mexico State University. In 2013 several people were recognized: Stan Rounds, Superintendent of Las Cruces Public Schools, Stephen Lopez, NMSU Chief of Police, parent, and CD Advisory Board member, Dr. Anne Hubbell, NMSU faculty member and parent, Lori McKee, CEO of NMSU Health Science Center, Dr. Grace Middleton, retired El Paso SLP, UTEP educator, and the organizer of the Mary Knott Memorial Scholarship for CD grad students, and Anthony Casaus, Sertoma member and CD Advisory Board Member. The event also served as a fundraiser for the department. The art of Shelly Black was sold with part of the proceeds.

Dr. Salas-Provance pictured right with one of the recipients of the Friends of CD award NMSU Chief of Police Stephen Lopez.

**Dr. Spencer Presented a Seminar at 2013 NMSHA**

This October the New Mexico Speech and Hearing Association annual convention was held in Albuquerque, NM. Thanks to a generous grant obtained from ASHA by our NMSHA president, Michale Kaplan, we were able to provide funding to five undergraduate students so they could attend the conference. Two undergraduates, Leslie Guzman and Brianna Radosevich, presented a poster regarding spelling skills and third graders who were either English Language Learners, Struggling to Read, Typically Developing or Deaf. In addition faculty members from the communication disorders department at NMSU participated by presenting research posters. Three college faculty, Amelia Medina, Adrienne Herrenbruck and Tenecia Yeboah presented posters relating to their research topics of clinical education, bilingualism and Alternative and Augmentative Communication. In addition, Dr. Linda Spencer, Program Director presented a day-long seminar on techniques for increasing phonological awareness abilities in children as a way to expand literacy skills.

Students and faculty with NMHA president Dr. Michael Kaplan and past president Bryan Tierney.
National Speech Student Language Hearing Association

The National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) participated in several community events this year, including: The Project Back to School: Gadsden and Las Cruces, Aggie Fest, Cruceno Cleanup, the Country and Christmas fair in El Paso, Meca Therapies’ Christmas Elves Event, the NMSU cleft-palate clinic, Triunity Conference, Keep State Great, the Big Event, and Relay for Life. Additionally, NSSLHA members traveled to Santa Fe for the New Mexico Speech-Language Hearing Association (NMSLHA) conference in February. NSSLHA continued serving members of the community by volunteering at Cottonbloom Assisted Living facility and helping with Cards for Raul.

The members of NSSLHA have helped to create and distribute the cards created by the talented Raul in an effort to help him in anyway possible and also to meet his financial needs. They traveled to Cotton Bloom retirement village to put a smile on the faces of the residents who enjoy playing bingo with the members, as well as winning fabulous prizes provided by NSSLHA. Along with their traditional community service opportunities, NSSLHA has reached out to other organizations that are eager and determined to make a difference in our community. Cruseño Cleanup is an organization that goes around Las Cruces every week and picks up trash that litters our beautiful city. My Best Friends Closet was an event that was organized by two of the members, Annie Elizabeth Wood, along with Breanna Romero. They helped fill the clothing cache at Las Casa women’s shelter. Through these partnerships, NSSLHA has helped clean up Las Cruces and had a hand in assisting Annie in collecting over 900 articles of clothing to overfill La Casa’s clothing storage room. Most recently, NSSLHA organized the first annual Be A Giver 5K, the proceeds were used for new materials for the Edgar R. Garret Speech and Hearing Clinic.
Council for Exceptional Children
NMSU Student Chapter

CEC had an awesome year of volunteering and raising awareness about disabilities. We walked in the Homecoming parade with Southern New Mexico Down Syndrome Families! We opened a fake tattoo booth at the Special Olympic Games in Las Cruces. We volunteered in a special education classroom in a local elementary school. We had a blast raising awareness about Autism on campus by decorating the Speech Building with blue ribbon, and handling out flyers. If you want more information about CEC like us on Facebook, NMSU Student Chapter: Council for Exceptional Children, or email Natalie Cannon at natalieb@nmsu.edu
Camp New Amigos is a week-long day camp for children with autism in southern New Mexico. The purpose of the camp is to provide a safe and fun environment that is structured and accommodates the needs of children with autism, allowing them to experience a typical summer camp. This summer will be our fourth camp and each year we have expanded our activities and increased the number of children who participate. Camp New Amigos 2014 will be held from June 2 to June 6 on the NMSU campus. Campers between age 5 and age 18 will be accepted this year. There will be two parallel camps – one for the younger children and one for the older children.

In addition to the previously offered activities (arts and crafts, sports, games, swimming, horseback riding, and music), this year we are adding archery with a certified archery instructor, kayaking, and a climbing wall.

The camp is staffed with volunteer counselors from the Mariposa Autism Services Center (MASC), New Mexico-Preparing Autism Spectrum Specialists (NM-PASS), NMSU undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students, and teachers from local school districts. We have at least a 2:1 counselor to camper ratio, allowing for individualized attention. Typically developing peers help the counselors and serve as role models and peer buddies.
Last summer, the Edgar R. Garrett Speech and Hearing Center marked its 5th year of bringing Readers’ Theater Camp to local K-12 students. Directed by clinical faculty member, Amelia Medina, the group of 14 children, 12 graduate students in speech pathology, and 2 supervising speech-language pathologists, presented the Caldecott Award-winning *Knuffle Bunny*, by Mo Willems. A story about what all parents dread leaving an irreplaceable “lovie” behind. The camp provided oral language and reading development opportunities during large and small group social activities, rehearsals, and theater arts that emphasized lighting and sound effects. Nearly 50 family and friends from the community attended the final performances! Summer 2014 will mark the camps 6th year, the camp will take place June 16th - 26th.
The opportunity to travel abroad and provide clinical services abroad as a student come only once in a lifetime. For those students fortunate enough to be able to go on this trip, they will leave for Lima, Peru on Thursday, May 22nd and return on Thursday, June 5th. While there, they will provide speech therapy to individuals with cleft lip and palate, articulation problems and other speech and language disorders in both children and adults. The students will be part of the NMSU Faculty Lead International Experience (FLiP) program lead by Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance, Department Head in the department of Special Education and Communication Disorders. Dr. Salas-Provance has professional partnerships in Lima, Peru where she has travelled many times to provide speech pathology services as a medical team member for Rotaplast International. Students will have a culturally and professionally enriching experience during these two weeks which will change them forever. Their new understanding of the world and the work they will do in an international environment will make a significant impact on their lives as future speech-language pathologists.

The students have been preparing for the trip by organizing three presentations to be presented in Peru, presenting at various organizations around Las Cruces, preparing materials, and fundraising. Students will be required to give three presentations in Spanish, one for the staff at an orphanage about pediatric language development, one for professionals about cleft palate, and one for families about therapy techniques. The students have given presentations to Sertoma and Rotary groups. The majority of the students going to Peru are bilingual and will be providing services in Spanish; those who are not bilingual will be using interpreters.

Dr. Salas-Provance with a SLP from Peru
Students fundraising at TriUnity

Students preparing materials

Students fundraising at Rotary

Dr. Salas-Provance and students shopping for supplies
Dr. Cuadros Presents to NMSU CD Graduate Students

Dr. Luis Cuadros is a plastic surgeon from Albuquerque, he is widely recognized in the state of New Mexico and around the country. Dr. Cuadros is a renowned expert in cleft and lip palate surgeries. For the last twenty years he has dedicated a large part of his practice to serving the children of New Mexico. He is an enthusiastic advocate for children with cleft palate. Dr. Cuadros has been a critical part of the semi-annual Cleft Palate team at New Mexico State University. During his most recent visit to NMSU, Dr. Cuadros gave a wonderful and educational presentation to first and second year graduate students from the Communication Disorders program. The presentation included details about cleft palate repairs options and the graduate students were able to watch a video of a real cleft palate surgery. Dr. Cuadros has been a great asset and wonderful friend to New Mexico State University.

Randa Keeley - Teacher and Student Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Co-teaching Models: A Comparison

Leslie Costa– Guerra - Semantic Language Patterns Among Tewa Pueblo Students: The Northern New Mexico Example

Two New PhDs in SPED/CD in 2014

We are proud of two new doctoral graduates for this spring. Randa Keeley will join the department in the Fall of 2014. Leslie will continue her work in Northern New Mexico for now, but she will be a university faculty member soon. We wish them both the best!
Provost Dr. Dan Howard Visits the SPED / CD Department

Dr. Howard returned to NMSU on August 1, 2013 to serve as Executive Vice President and Provost. Prior to his return, he spent five years at the University of Colorado Denver as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Dr. Howard first arrived at NMSU 25 years ago as an assistant professor of biology. A distinguished member of the faculty, he earned recognition as a Regents Professor and served as Head of the Department of Biology. During his time as department head, he spearheaded the effort to renovate and expand Foster Hall and he led the team that secured the first Howard Hughes Medical Institute Improvement of Undergraduate Science Education grant at NMSU.

NMSU Grad Committed to Pediatric Speech Pathology; Opens New Tucson Clinic

Guy Manuel Garcia, M.A. S.L.P '01, continues his ten-plus years’ commitment to speech pathology with a new pediatric clinic in Tucson. Garcia opened Jenny's Speech and Learning Clinic in June. "Our goal is to provide speech therapy that is most likely to get positive results," he says. Garcia and his staff provide intensive, individualized therapy and use research-based and up-to-date technology and therapy techniques for the most difficult communication disorders. The clinic setting complements the many years Garcia's parent company, VO-CES, has provided bilingual speech therapy in Tucson schools and elsewhere in Arizona. The clinic offers the personal attention needed to help children overcome speech delays and gain communication skills. Jenny's Clinic offers evaluations, therapy, workshops for parents and professionals, and enrichment classes for young children. (Learn more at www.jennysspeech.com.)

"When families think of what's positive in Tucson for kids, we want them to think of Jenny's Clinic and all that we do," says Garcia.
A Busy Year for Dr. Rhein

Dr. Rhein’s Fall started off with a bang, as she received a second grant for the bilingual concentration, this time for $1.25 over five years. Then the Assistant Secretary of Education, Micheal Yudin, came to NMSU to see how the funds from these grants were being spent. During the course of the year Dr. Rhein participated in the Advancing Leaders Program, where she learned about management and budgeting, among other items. The most fun part of the program was the day she attended the NMSU horse farm and learned about leadership by getting a horse to follow her, then gallop, then trot, then follow her again doing figure eights. This was all done without touching the horse or using reins, just by using her voice and body language. She is, perhaps, most proud that she was the only member of her group to get the horse to comply with all the tasks. I guess she learned something in all those years of working with non-verbal children! Finally, she is wrapping up the year by finishing up a chapter she has been working on. Dr. Rhein is moving into a new role during Fall 2014 semester. She is assuming the role of Associate Department head. Her additional responsibilities will include overseeing the doctoral program and directing the department’s four personnel preparation grants. She said, "The department is at an exciting place, where the potential for new opportunities and growth are prevalent. It’s wonderful to be part of this process."

Congratulations Graduates!

May 2014 Master’s Communication Disorders Graduates Left
December 2013 Graduate Special Education Graduates Right
SPED / CD Awards and Achievements

Sandra Romero, SPED / CD administrative assistant, was awarded the prestigious Above and Beyond award by the University and President Garrey Carruthers.

Sandra Romero pictured:
Top left with NMSU Regents
Bottom left with her family
Top right with Dean Morehead and Dr Salas-Provance
Morgan Hardin
SPED Outstanding
Graduate Student
From NMSU Alumni Association

Morgan Hardin pictured with interim Dean of the Graduate School Dr. Lou Reyes

Dr. Alfred Valdez Received Tenure and was promoted to Associate Professor!

Dr. Valdez received his Bachelor of University Studies and Master of Science degrees at the University of New Mexico. His bachelor’s degree emphasized studies in special education, psychology and communicative disorders and he received his master’s degree in speech-language pathology. He holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech-Language Pathology from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), and he is licensed by the state of New Mexico Occupational Licensing Board and the New Mexico Public Education Department. He served as a member on the ASHA Committee on Supportive Personnel and on the ASHA Task Force for the Improvement of Services for Minority Populations. He also served on the State of New Mexico Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Occupational Licensure Board. Dr. Valdez has over 25 years of experience as a speech-language pathologist practicing in a variety of settings including public schools, hospitals and clinics, and in private practice. He completed his Ph.D. in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in research methodology/statistics and cognitive science at the University of New Mexico. His interests include applying cognitive theories to educational technology, early language development/disorders, phonological development/disorders, and basic/advanced statistical methods.
HAIL AND FAREWELL

This year we welcome five new faculty members, Dr. Skri Mishra, audiologist, Dr. Heike LeHouillier, speech science/voice disorders, Dr. Randa Keeley and Dr. Karen Potter secondary special education, Ms. Margie Medina, clinical educator, and Ms. Amelia Medina Rau promoted to tenure track position. We also said farewell to Dr. Victoria White and Dr. Kathleen Cronin, Dr. Youkyung Bae who went to The Ohio State University and Dr. Monica Brown to University of Nevada-Las Vegas. We wish them all the best.

Faculty Achievements and Updates

Dr. Alfred Valdez

1. Presentations: Dr. Valdez presented at ASHA and at the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

2. Publications: In 2013, Dr. Valdez published four articles in respected peer-reviewed journals.

Grants: In addition, Dr. Valdez contributed to the development of the internal and external evaluation for the following grants:
   Wiburg, K., Chamberlin, B., Trujillo, K., Stanford, T., Korn, K., Valdez, A. (2014). Math Snacks Algebra: Using Games and Media to Help Students Understand Patterns, Variables, and Equations, supported by the National Science Foundation (~ $4,000,000 pending).
Amelia Medina

1. Amelia Medina Rau, College Assistant Professor and Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders was selected to receive a 2013 Student Research Grant in Early Childhood Language through the American-Speech-Language-Hearing (ASHA) Foundation for her dissertation proposal entitled “Comparing Treatment Effects for Young Bilinguals with Language Impairment.” This grant is funded by the Arlene Matkin Memorial Fund with ASHA Special Interest Group 1 support.

2. Soon defending her dissertation work, Ms. Medina Rau has also accepted a tenure track position as Assistant Professor with the department to begin Fall, 2014.

Dr. Zhen Chai

1. Grants:
Chai, Z. (Principal Investigator). Using “Touch Sound” with SMART Board Technology to Promote Early Literacy Skills for Young Children with Disabilities in a Small Group Setting. COE Internal Grant, College of Education, New Mexico State University, $2,000, (03/2014).
Chai, Z. (Principal Investigator). Touch Sound: the App for Early Literacy Skills. NMSU Arrowhead Center, $23,000. (02/2014).

2. Publication:

3. Presentations:


Dr. Loana Mason


- Past-President of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division on Visual Impairments
- Facilitator of the NMSU Visual Impairment Program Advisory Committee
- Host of the Southwestern New Mexico Vision Learning Circle
- Administrator of the Visual Impairment Program Facebook Page
- SPED/CD Representative on the NMSU College Council--College Track Faculty Committee
- Co-Advisor of the Council for Exceptional Children--NMSU Chapter
- Member of the Vision Bee Planning Committee
Dr. Marlene Salas-Provance


Salas-Provance, M.B. (October, 2013). Two day bilingual (Spanish) workshop for the First International Congress in Speech-Language Pathology and Orthodontics in the area of Cleft Lip and Palate, Lima, Peru.


Salas-Provance, M.B. (June, 2013). Cleft Care and Practice Worldwide, Hospital Allied Health Professionals at Hospital Arzobizpo Layoza, Lima Peru


Many thanks to all who contributed to this newsletter. A special thank you to Nell Baird for creating this issue of Conexiones. Additional thanks to Jessica Nunn, Guille Hijar–Alvidrez, Jessica Bozzell. Please send us updates! Next year, we would like to include an Alumni section and share what our students do after graduation!

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