

## From the Chairperson's Desk

Jim Tsiamtsiouris, Ph.D., CCC-SLP  
Department Chair

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On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences at William Paterson University, I extend a most sincere welcome to the undergraduate class of 2016 and the graduate class of 2014. As department chair, I feel privileged to be able to represent such an engaged and talented community of faculty, staff, and students. Our department has grown to 7 full-time faculty, three full-time staff members, and a cadre of highly experienced adjunct faculty and clinical supervisors—all working to provide the highest quality academic and clinical education for 100 undergraduate majors and 65 graduate students. We are a department that actively engages in scholarly activity, innovative teaching and clinical education, and a strong commitment to advocacy/outreach ef-

forts. I am excited to report that the majority of faculty and a number of students will present their scholarly work at the 2012 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

I hope everyone had a chance to read President Waldron's address to William Paterson on September 4, 2012 in which she mentioned the plan to move our department to a new and state-of-the-art four-story building with 83,000 square feet. This is a testament that we have outgrown Hunziker Wing, and that William Paterson is committed to providing the best possible education and clinical training for students. Another positive sign of commitment to students is the hiring of two new full-time faculty members and a number of new adjunct faculty and clinical supervisors who

are very experienced in their areas of specialization. Despite the growth in enrollment, our students continue to have a very favorable student to professor ratio relative to most other programs of speech-language pathology.

Another development is the retirement of Dean DeYoung and the appointment of Dr. Kenneth Wolf as the new Dean of the College of Science and Health. In addition to being a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Dr. Wolf is a highly experienced scholar, administrator, and audiologist. It should be noted that Fellowship is one of the highest honors the Association bestows, and only a few individuals in New Jersey hold this honor.

I look forward to an exciting year and hearing about all of the great accomplishments that occur throughout the year.

## Highlights from the 2011/12 Academic Year

The Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences had an exciting year. It continued to grow in popularity and quality. The university received a record-breaking 421 graduate applications from individuals interested in coming to William Paterson to study communication disorders.

Eleven students graduated with their Bachelor of Art degree and transitioned into the graduate program. Their mean GPA was a very impressive 3.74. Another noteworthy accomplishment was the first student to graduate from the BA/MS Combined Program. In addition to being the first to graduate from this program, she was the first in the history of the department to give a commencement speech at the graduation ceremonies at the Izod Center.

Twenty-four students graduated with their Master of Science degree and embarked on their careers in speech-language pathology. Most had job offers before they officially graduated from the program. Once again, our pass rate on the praxis national exam was 100%. The national average for other programs is 85%. Congratulations to students and faculty for a job well done!



The university received a record-breaking 421 graduate applications from individuals interested in coming to William Paterson to study communication disorders.

Faculty and alumni presented their research at the 2011 American Speech-Language-Hearing Convention in San Diego, California. Drs. Magaldi and Kollia were co-authors on a presentation entitled “Iconicity & Feature Preferences During Visual-Spatial Tasks in Autism.” Dr. Jim Tsiamtsiouris presented his research on the development of language factors and how it impacts speech fluency. In addition, he was a member of the ASHA committee that helped organize the topics in fluency disorders. Two graduates of our program, Vanessa Watson and Rachel Goldman, presented their thesis research. Their studies involved the development of auditory and visual integration in speech perception and theory of mind development and effect of speaker certainty on lexical acquisition. Drs. Gelfer, Kollia, and Hsu served as their thesis advisors. Additional presentations were made at the 6th Annual Autism Conference of the Association for Behavior Analysis in Philadelphia, PA. Drs. Magaldi and Kollia presented their most recent findings on pictorial iconicity and visual-spatial matching tasks in children with autism.

## Highlights from the 2011/12 Academic Year

The Department's Speech and Hearing Clinic continues to help families in need of screenings, evaluations, and therapy. Faculty and students performed numerous pre-school speech, language and hearing screenings at numerous sites around New Jersey. A total of 364 preschool children were screened at these sites. This year, the total number of clients seen for speech/language therapy and diagnostic evaluations on campus increased by 83 clients to a total of 349 clients (236 for therapy, 113 for diagnostics on campus). In addition, 20 diagnostic evaluations were performed at varied school districts throughout the northern NJ area for children awaiting Child Study Team Assess-



This year, the total number of clients seen for speech/language therapy and diagnostic evaluations on campus increased by 83 clients to a total of 349 clients

ment. A total of 469 community hearing screenings were performed as well.

In April 2012, the WPU Chapter of the National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) hosted the 2nd Annual Autism Awareness Day to raise awareness about autism throughout the campus and the community. Students had the opportunity to learn about autism, view beautiful artwork created by children with autism, and enjoy some sweets.

Dr. Nicole Magaldi led an "Autism 101" talk, enlightening the audience on the signs, symptoms, and treatment of autism. Guest speaker, Ms. Janet Henry, an art teacher of Colonial Road School in Franklin Lakes, NJ, spoke about the use of art with autism. A bake sale helped NSSLHA raise and donate money to Autism Speaks, the nation's largest autism science and advocacy organization dedicated to funding research for the causes, prevention, and cure for autism. NSSLHA is looking forward to hosting another successful Autism Awareness Day next April!

Our students continue to receive awards for excellence. Dr. Vishwa Bhat presented Ms. Corianne Faber, a student in our graduate program, with the Marni Riesberg Award for Clinical Excellence at the annual convention of the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association. This event took place in Long Branch, NJ.

## New Faculty Join CODS Department

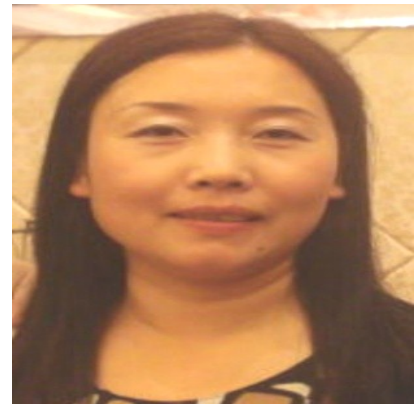
### Kristen Victorino



Kristen Victorino, Ph.D., CCC-SLP received her doctorate from the CUNY Graduate Center in 2011. She specializes in child language development and disorders, and her research focuses on attention and executive function in children with language impairment. Prior to joining our department, Dr. Victorino was an adjunct instructor at Montclair State University. She also has 13 years of clinical experience in varied settings. Dr. Victorino is excited to be teaching in her areas of expertise this semester, including courses in Language Acquisition and Diagnostic Methods. She looks forward to continuing her research at WPU, and supporting student research endeavors as a thesis supervisor. You can contact her at [victorinok@wpunj.edu](mailto:victorinok@wpunj.edu).

Dr. Victorino has expertise in language acquisition, diagnostic methods, and childhood language disorders.

### Yan Helen Yu



Yan Helen Yu, M.A., CCC-SLP is a Ph.D. candidate in the Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences Program at the CUNY Graduate Center, and a full-time faculty member at William Paterson University. She is a recipient of the CUNY Graduate Center Science Fellowship and a recipient of Doctoral Student Research Grant Program - Competition #4. Yan's primary research interest pertains to the brain mechanisms of speech and lexical development in children, especially bilingual children. She is currently working on several research projects including Dr. Valerie Shafer's Neural Basis of Speech Discrimination R01 grant, a joint grant of Dr. Valerie Shafer and Dr. April Benaisch on assessing language processing in children with autistic spectrum disorders, a study investigating morphosyntactic processing in children with specific language impairment. Her dissertation investigates the role of language experience and brain maturation on Mandarin lexical tone processing using event-related potentials as measures. You can contact her at [yuy3@wpunj.edu](mailto:yuy3@wpunj.edu).

Yan H. Yu & Valerie L. Shafer. (2011). Electrophysiological Indices of Six-month-olds' Sensitivity to English Vowels: gender effect and language experience. *The Proceedings of the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development (BUCLD)*, 35(2), 652-664.

American Sign Language is the leading minority language in the U.S. after the four most popular languages: Spanish, Italian, German and French.

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 12:30 (Common Hour) in Hunziker Wing 16. The meeting dates for Fall 2012 are as follows: October 2<sup>nd</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup>, and December 4<sup>th</sup>.

## American Sign Language

Francine Nicosia will teach the first ever course on American Sign Language at William Paterson University. She looks forward to teaching students about deaf culture and American Sign Language (ASL), as this is one of her passions and areas of expertise. ASL is the language of the Deaf in the United States. As stated in *A Journey into the Deaf World*, there are about 500,000 to 2,000,000 speakers in the United States alone. It is the leading minority language in the U.S. after the four most popular languages: Spanish, Italian, German and French. Signed languages are not the same all over the world. In fact, there are dialects all over the United States. It should be noted that ASL is not spoken like the English language. It is a language all on its own using its own grammar rules and syntax.

Mrs. Nicosia learned ASL as an infant in an effort to communicate with her deaf parents. Her grandparents lived downstairs from her when she was a young child and they made sure that she could speak as well as sign. She began interpreting for her parents as early as four years old. This developed into a job as a professional interpreter and a special educator. Not all children of deaf adults sign well enough to interpret but most use sign well enough to communicate with their family.

## The William Paterson University Chapter of the National Student Speech- Language-Hearing Association

The William Paterson University Chapter of the National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA) is excited to begin a new year of activities and events on (and off) campus! This year, the chapter is going to hold events that have proved to be successful in the past, such as our famous cupcake fund raising event, while incorporating new ideas into the club as well. One of our new ideas, courtesy of Janine Smith, is "Motivational Mondays." Every Monday, the chapter will send out an encouraging email with either a funny picture or a motivational quote to start everyone's week on a positive note. In November, there will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bowl-A-Thon Fundraiser at the T-Bowl in Wayne. April will be reserved for Autism Awareness. In addition to the bake sale and lectures, we will be making blue puzzle piece pins to sell and raise money for Autism Speaks.

Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month at 12:30 (Common Hour) in Hunziker Wing 16. The meeting dates for Fall 2012 are as follows: October 2<sup>nd</sup>, November 6<sup>th</sup>, and December 4<sup>th</sup>. If you would like to join NSSLHA or receive updates about social events and fundraisers, please email the executive board president, Katie McNamara at [mcnamarak2@student.wpunj.edu](mailto:mcnamarak2@student.wpunj.edu). The plan is to make this a fun, successful school year for everyone!

## Christopher Vacca '00

When I was first accepted to the Communication Disorders/Sciences program at William Paterson University I thought I had it all figured out. I would graduate with my graduate degree in three years and begin working in the area of fluency disorders. I had already been volunteering at a stuttering clinic for a couple of years and had numerous conversations with the director (a wonderful SLP herself) about possibly working there after graduation. Well, it's funny how things change. The WPU speech-language pathology program helped open my eyes to all the fascinating aspects of our profession. It truly is one of the few occupations that span the entire life cycle. From infant-based interventions all the way through geriatric care, we play an important role in improving, maintaining, and sometimes easing the decline of communication skills of our clients.

I was lucky enough to have my fellowship year at school which specializes in educating children with autism and behavioral disorders. I consider this to be on the "front lines" of the battle against the current crisis of childhood developmental disorders. My three years at the school were the hands-on education that I needed to set upon the path of becoming a competent clinician. The SLP staff was more than helpful and patient as I learned how to handle the variety of situations that arise daily in working with children with special needs. I took these lessons with me when I opened my own private practice in Kinnelon. I have worked with pediatric, adolescent and adult clients with an array of issues including articulation delays, swallowing concerns, stuttering, voice issues, and all sorts of language impairments. As a private practitioner, the opportunity to expand my role as a SLP from the office-based setting was apparent. I was afforded the chance to provide in-services on stuttering as well as early childhood development, consult with non-public schools for improved therapy efficacy, serve as an independent contractor, and travel to pre-school programs to conduct speech & language screenings. I have also spent a significant amount of time working with the early intervention population (children from 0-3 yrs of age). This experience has shown me how not just to elicit language from two year olds, but also how to counsel and educate parents. I've seen that, sometimes, parents just need a reassuring voice telling them that it'll be ok.

Currently I have found my way back into the school setting as a full-time speech-language pathologist with the Wayne School District. In addition, I still provide private services after school hours and have recently teamed up with Dr. Jim Tsiamtsiouris of William Paterson in forming a fluency practice group for adults who stutter.

I feel it is important to continue to evolve in our professional lives. I realize that I still don't have it all figured out. Not by a long shot. My energy and enthusiasm for our profession continues to grow. Ours is a fascinating field. So as I continue to work with clients through their life cycles, I am confident that I will remain involved with speech-language pathology through my own as well.

◆ Christopher Vacca

◆ Speech-Language Pathologist in the Wayne Township School District

◆ Class of 2000 M.S. Program in Communication Disorders

## Meghan Scancarella '10

- ◆ Meghan Scancarella
- ◆ Speech-Language Pathologist in the Wayne Township School District
- ◆ Class of 2010 M.S. Program in Communication Disorders

When Meghan Scancarella first heard a student say hello to her, she knew that she had found the ideal career. A speech-language pathologist with a multi-syllabic last name comprised primarily of /s/'s, /r/'s and /l/'s! Perfect!

“While not every William Paterson graduate is blessed with the built in articulation screening tool that I’m lucky enough to have, when you graduate I believe you will find that you have truly been well prepared to succeed in the field of Speech Language Pathology,” she says.

As an elementary school based SLP, she evaluates and treats children with a wide range of communication disabilities including those with developmental delays, fluency disorders, auditory processing deficits, neurological syndromes, autism, hearing impairments and, especially, difficulties with /s/'s, /r/'s, and /l/'s.

“There is actually not a day that goes by that I’m not glad (in hindsight, at least) to have taken each and every one of the required courses in the Communication Disorders program. My caseload is so diverse, it really has been important to have had the background WPU provided.”

Prior to graduating from WPU in 2010, Meghan earned her bachelor’s degree in Marketing Communications from Boston College and her M.B.A. from Fordham University. She currently works as a Speech Language Specialist in the Wayne Township, NJ school district.

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## Jessica Scheuer '03

- ◆ Jessica Scheuer
- ◆ Doctoral student at City University of New York
- ◆ Class of 2003 M.S. Program in Communication Disorders

Jessica Scheuer graduated with an M.S. degree in communication disorders in 2003. She began her career as a speech-language pathologist in the public schools working with children. After seven years of teaching, she decided to go back to school and enrolled in the Speech-Language-Hearing Doctoral Program at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She believes that the quality of the education received within the Department of Communication Disorders has given her a solid foundation for her work in the public schools. In addition, she believes that the heavy research focus of the program prepared her for doctoral studies.

In addition to being a doctoral student, Jessica returned to the Department of Communication Disorders this semester to teach an undergraduate course in the anatomy and physiology of the speech and swallow mechanism. She looks forward to educating the next generation of speech-language pathologists.

## Laura Bermingham '10 & '12

As the first graduate of WPU Communication Disorders' BA/MS program, I was asked to share some of my thoughts, experiences and 'wisdom' with those of you who are taking on the same endeavor. Whether you are just starting out, or mere months from completion, you should be congratulated and commended on the hard work you've done to get where you are.

When I think back to one of my first classes in the program, Clinical Methods, one thing that comes to mind is the list of qualities that are necessary for being a successful clinician. There were several, but the one that really sticks out for me is flexibility. Being flexible is not only important for being a good clinician, but it is also very important for being a good student. Throughout my time at William Paterson, the Department of Communication Disorders has undergone, and continues to undergo, numerous and major changes; such as the development and implementation of the BA/MS program, a new Graduate Program Director, an Interim Department Chair (due to sabbatical), an Interim Graduate Program Director (due to maternity leave) and a new Department Chair. On top of that, I had 4 different academic advisors...phew! If I wasn't flexible, I don't think I would have survived!

Well, the dust is starting to settle, and things are falling into place, so be patient, when you consider the major changes that are taking place to grow and make this program bigger and stronger, there are bound to be some glitches. So, it's up to you how you handle those glitches, will you complain about them and let them hold you up, or will you be part of the solution and do something to make them better? Use the suggestion box in the Clinicians' Room, it is there for a reason, and I promise that it is checked on a regular basis. After working in the Clinicians' Room for 2 years, I think I maybe saw 2 or 3 suggestions, but I heard an awful lot of complaining...they can't fix it if they don't know how you feel, our faculty is only human. This is your program and your education, take a hold of it and get the most out of it. It may be frustrating at times when something might fall through the cracks, but ultimately it is up to you to get through it, be flexible, be positive, and be proactive. This is also your program to pass along to the future BA/MS students, how do you want to leave it?

With all of that said, I have a few final 'survival tips' to get you through the rest of your time here. 1) Read your Graduate Handbook and Clinician's Handbook (and any other handbook you are given), almost everything you need to know to get through is in one of these handbooks. I would even recommend re-reading them before each semester so you don't miss anything (and please don't use the excuse 'Nobody told me about this...', it's all in there, and if it's not, find out and share the information with everyone else). 2) Enjoy being a student while you can. Most of you have probably been in school since you were 5 years old, and if not, you've already had a dose of the 'real world' and understand how nice it is to be a student. 3) Keep your eye on the prize. Remember why you are here, to become a speech-language pathologist, or to move on to get a PhD, so don't sweat the small stuff, one of my favorite sayings is "It all comes out in the wash," and trust me, it does. 4) Listen to your supervisors, really listen to them, and soak up all that you can, be it good or bad. You may not realize it, but most likely you will never have this amount of attention from someone so experienced again. You are in the process of forming who you will be as a clinician, and each experience you have, positive or negative, is contributing to this process. And finally- 5) Don't freak out about Comps and Praxis! I know that none of you will take this advice, but seriously try to remain as calm as you can, it will pay off. You will have completed the coursework and passed all of the classes, so start studying early and relax...you know more than you think you do. I wish each of you much success in this program and in your future!

- ◆ Laura Bermingham
- ◆ Class of 2010  
B.A. in  
Communication  
Disorders
- ◆ Class of 2012  
M.S. in  
Communication  
Disorders

## Scholarly Activity by Faculty and Students

The **2012 American Speech-Language-Hearing (ASHA) Convention** will be held at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta, Georgia, from November 15–17, 2012. The ASHA Convention is the premier annual event for speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. Bringing together more than 12,000 attendees, the annual Convention provides students and professionals with a once-a-year opportunity to learn about the latest evidence-based research, polish clinical skills, improve techniques and gain new tools and resources to advance their career and augment the workplace. The host city, Atlanta, provides a rich historical setting for the annual event. The 2012 Convention theme, "Evidence of Excellence: Opportunities and Outcomes," will focus on the partnership between clinical practice and research—the unique continuum in which evidence informs practice, which, in turn, builds the evidence base. Individuals seeking to further their professional knowledge base will find that learning opportunities abound at the ASHA Convention; the result is better outcomes for clients, students, researchers, and patients.

A number of faculty and students will represent our department at the 2012 Convention. Show your support and attend their presentation if you plan on attending the conference.

- ⇒ The effects of instructional method on first grade children's morphological awareness skills presented by **L. Domb** and **C. Gelfer**
- ⇒ Neural indices of phonetics in bilingual children presented by V. Shafer, **Y. Yu**, J. Gerometta, C. Tesel, and N. Vidal
- ⇒ Auditory selective attention in children with SLI presented by **K. Victorino** and R. Schwartz
- ⇒ Assisted reproduction technology and the incidence of autism spectrum disorder presented by M. Shakibai, **N. Magaldi** and **B. Kollia**
- ⇒ L1-Russian influence on L2-English syntax and grammar presented by **Rebecca Zolotkovsky** and **Betty Kollia**
- ⇒ Investigating children's organization of script knowledge over time by **Emily Laccona** and **Betty Kollia**

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## Future Conferences

The 2013 New York Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Convention will be held at the Saratoga Hilton on April 11-13 in Saratoga Springs, New York.

The 2013 New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Convention will be held at the Ocean Place Resort and Spa on April 25-25, 2013 in Long Branch, New Jersey.

Please note that the deadline for submitting a presentation proposal for the 2013 ASHA Convention, which will be held in Chicago in November 2013, is March 2013. Also note that there are university funds available to assist students in travelling to conferences if they are presenting research.

## Advisement of Students

### Do all students need advisement?

Yes. Every student has an assigned academic advisor. The purpose of the advisor is to ensure that the student has an appropriate curriculum/clinical sequence and graduates in a timely manner. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the student to seek out advisement from their assigned academic advisor.

### When do I seek out my advisor?

You should seek out your advisor upon entering the program in order to receive a curriculum/clinical sequence plan. After the initial advisement appointment in which your curriculum/clinical sequence plan is established, you should seek advisement periodically and as necessary. Any changes to your established curriculum/clinical sequence plan will need to be approved by your academic advisor.

### Who is the undergraduate program advisor?

The Advisement Center provides advisement to all freshmen who declare Communication Disorders as their major. Students who have earned more than 24 credits are assigned a faculty advisor from the Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences. For these students and for the 2012/13 academic year, Dr. Gelfer is the undergraduate major advisor for the Department of Communication Disorders and Sciences.

### Who are the graduate program advisors?

Drs. Magaldi and Tsiamtsiouris are the graduate program advisors for the 2012/13 academic year.

### What happens when I have been advised to register for a particular course and the course becomes full and closed before I have a chance to register for it?

The department will either give you an override permit or another section will be opened. If you are closed out of a class and you are required to register for it, you should reach out to your advisor as soon as possible.

### How do I stay on top of some of the programmatic changes that occur within the department?

The best way to avoid inaccurate rumors and limit unnecessary concern is to reach out to your academic advisor if you are worried about a programmatic change that may impact your education. Your advisor should be able to respond to all your inquiries.

### How does a student know in which semester courses are offered?

This information can be found in the student's curriculum plan. The plan outlines the time and sequence of courses over the next 2-, 3-, or 4 years.

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◆ Dr. Nicole Magaldi  
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◆ Dr. Jim Tsiamtsiouris  
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◆ Last day for  
academic  
withdrawal for the  
Fall 2012 semester  
is October 23, 2012

◆ Fall 2012 semester  
ends on December  
21, 2012

◆ Spring 2012  
semester begins on  
January 14, 2013

## CONTACT US

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