TAASLP CONVENTION 2026 COURSE ABSTRACTS, LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND DISCLOSURES

Friday, October 9th

Satisfactory Completion: To be eligible to earn ASHA Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for a session, participants must attend the presentation in full and complete a provided post-course assessment and course evaluation.

PRE-SCHOOL/SCHOOL-AGE SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SESSIONS

8:00-9:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Beth Bergstrom, M.S., CCC/SLP and Trina Becker, M.S., CCC/SLP

The AAC P.A.G.E.S: Profile, Analysis of Learning, and Goals

Course Abstract:

Do you struggle assessing an AAC communicator's ability level and determining goals? This presentation will introduce an AAC Communicator Profile which will assist in determining a child's AAC Communicator Category, learning style, and factors for AAC success. A hierarchy of goals for emerging, nonsymbolic, functional, GLP, and generative AAC communicators will be shared.

Course Objectives:

After attending this presentation participants will be able to:

1. Assess and determine a child's AAC Communicator Category and learning style (GLP or analytic)
2. Explain how to rate and integrate factors for AAC success
3. Use a continuum of goals to select appropriate goals for each AAC Communicator Category

Disclosures:

Trina Becker has a relevant financial relationship in the form of intellectual property rights and receives royalties from B&B SLP Teachers Pay Teachers Store and website bbboutique.slp.com. Trina Becker has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Beth Bergstrom has a relevant financial relationship in the form of intellectual property rights and receives royalties from B&B SLP Teachers Pay Teachers Store and website bbboutique.slp.com. Beth Bergstrom has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Trina Becker, MS, CCC-SLP, is a professor at Eastern Illinois University in the department of Communication Disorders and Sciences. She is the instructor of the courses: Augmentative and Alternative Communication; AAC for Beginning Communicators; Phonological Assessment and Remediation; Advanced Speech Sound Disorders; and Advanced Clinical Treatment and Methodology. Trina is the director of clinical services at EIU, co-director of the EIU Autism Center, and supervises graduate student clinicians working with a variety of pediatric communication disorders. Trina and Mrs. Beth Bergstrom founded B&B SLP in 2021 to offer clinically relevant and practical resources and education to professionals and parents.

Beth Bergstrom, MS, CCC-SLP, is a Senior Instructor at Eastern Illinois University in the Communication Disorders & Sciences Department. She teaches content in the areas of Cleft Lip and Palate, Pediatric Feeding, Evaluation and Therapy, and Clinical Techniques & Diagnostics. She supervises both undergraduate and graduate students in clinical practicum. Mrs. Bergstrom supervises pediatric clients with a variety of disorders. She serves on the multidisciplinary evaluation team for autism at the EIU Autism Clinic. She and Mrs. Trina Becker developed B&B SLP in 2021 to offer clinically relevant and practical resources and education to professionals and parents.

9:10-10:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Kristen Secora, PhD, CCC-SLP

Analysis of Theory of Mind Content and Home Literacy Practices During Shared Reading Activities

Course Abstract:

Understanding and attributing mental states to oneself and others (termed “theory of mind”) is a critical skill acquired during a child’s language and cognitive development. Storybooks provide a natural way to explore and discuss others' perspectives but little is known about how ToM content is present within modern children’s literature and further, little is known about the interrelationship of these themes with the child’s Home Literacy Environment. This session will report on results from a parent survey regarding their child’s Home Literacy Environment and the relationship to ToM content of the books they read during a sample 7-day period.

Course Objectives:

1. Describe the relationship between a child's Home Literacy Environment and the theory of mind content in the books selected to read during shared reading activities at home.
2. Summarize the patterns in cognitive and affective ToM content within an updated sample of books reported having been read by parents of 3-6 year olds.
3. Identify three practical suggestions to incorporate evidence-based practices from the Home Literacy Environment to support ToM development in young children.

Disclosures:

Kristen Secora has a relevant financial relationship with the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in the form of salary for employment. Kristen Secora has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Kristen Secora is an Associate Professor of Communication Disorders at the University of Tennessee. Knoxville. Her research focuses on assessment and intervention practices of SLPs with deaf and hard of hearing children and perspective-taking.

10:10-10:40 Break

10:40-11:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Alexis Moser, MS, CCC-SLP

Holistic Assessment of Children with Speech Sound Disorders

Course Abstract:

This session is intended to guide SLPs in expanding their evaluation methods for children suspected of speech sound disorder (SSD) to include holistic assessments that measure the impact of SSD on children's communication attitudes, communicative participation, and intelligibility with a variety of listeners in all contexts. Using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (WHO, 2001), we will briefly examine how SSD not only affects body functions but also influences activities, participation, and environmental/personal factors. Furthermore, we will discuss available assessment tools, their research applications, and how they can be practically used in daily clinical practice to summarize functional impairments, write person-centered goals, and measure treatment progress.

Course Objectives:

1. Participants will DESCRIBE how components of the ICF framework can be applied to children with SSD.

2. Participants will NAME at least three holistic assessment tools available for evaluating children with SSD.
3. Participants will IDENTIFY at least one way to incorporate a holistic assessment tool into their current evaluation process.

Disclosures:

Alexis Moser has a relevant financial relationship with the Department of Education in the form of tuition and a stipend for her traineeship. Alexis Moser has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Alexis Moser is a pediatric speech-language pathologist and doctoral student in the Children's Literacy and Speech Sound (CLaSS) lab at Florida State University. She earned her M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology from East Tennessee State University. Her research interests include holistic assessment practices as well as the communication attitudes and communicative participation of children with speech sound disorders.

Lunch 11:40-1:00
(Awards, Scholarships, Student Spirit Competition)

1:00-2:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Melissa Henry, MA, CCC-SLP

22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome: Information for the SLP

Course Abstract:

This presentation aims to familiarize the learner with the clinical features of 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome (22qDS) also known as DiGeorge Syndrome. Multidisciplinary care, role of the SLP, early identification, diagnostic and therapeutic approach to care, and identification of cases in the school age population will be discussed. Common characteristics including feeding difficulties, learning and language delays, behavior issues, velopharyngeal dysfunction, and associated speech disorders will be discussed.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand clinical features of 22q11.2 Deletion Syndrome (22qDS)
2. Understand feeding, speech, language, resonance, and learning deficits associated with 22qDS
3. Understand best practice in management of children who have 22qDS

Disclosures:

Melissa Henry has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Melissa C. Henry, M.A., CCC-SLP is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, and a clinical provider at Vanderbilt Medical Center. She teaches several classes in the MS-SLP program for Hearing and Speech Sciences including Craniofacial Anomalies, Professional Issues, Clinical Principles and Procedures and Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing. In her 30+ years with VUMC, she has held a variety of leadership positions with the Medical Center and also at the local and state levels. Melissa's clinical expertise is in assessing and treating patients who have craniofacial differences, velopharyngeal insufficiency, tracheostomy, articulation and language disorders. Originally from Michigan, Melissa and her husband reside in Nashville, TN.

2:10-3:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Jack Henderson MS CCC-SLP

Stuttering Therapy - It's Not About Syllables Stuttered and Still About Behavior! Part I

Course Abstract:

As the discourse surrounding stuttering therapy continues to shift away from measuring success based on % syllables stuttered, there might arise an understandable misconception that stuttering therapy is just about “attitudes and feelings” and is not behavior change or even speech change. This session will discuss how outcomes for stuttering affirming therapy are still rooted in behavior change and how to target these changes in therapy.

Course Objectives:

1. Participants will describe how affective and cognitive aspects of stuttering can be measured behaviorally by the SLP.
2. Participants will examine the layers of macro and micro behaviors that people who stutter exhibit that go beyond the percentage of overt stuttering in a speech sample.
3. Participants will be able to develop therapy plans that address these broader behavioral changes for sustainable communication success.

Disclosures:

Jack Henderson has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Jack Henderson MS CCC-SLP (he/him) is a stutterer and owner of Henderson Stuttering Therapy, PLLC. Jack is a co-leader of the Nashville NSA chapter. Jack is on the board of SPACE, an international stuttering advocacy organization and Unscripted, a non-profit focused on empowering people through equitable access to improv. He is an adjunct professor at Austin Peay State University. He lives in Nashville, TN with his spouse and two children.

3:20-4:20 (1 Instructional Hour)

Jack Henderson MS CCC-SLP

Stuttering Therapy - It's Not About Syllables Stuttered and Still About Behavior! Part II

Course Abstract:

As the discourse surrounding stuttering therapy continues to shift away from measuring success based on % syllables stuttered, there might arise an understandable misconception that stuttering therapy is just about “attitudes and feelings” and is not behavior change or even speech change. This session will discuss how outcomes for stuttering affirming therapy are still rooted in behavior change and how to target these changes in therapy.

Course Objectives:

4. Participants will describe how affective and cognitive aspects of stuttering can be measured behaviorally by the SLP.
5. Participants will examine the layers of macro and micro behaviors that people who stutter exhibit that go beyond the percentage of overt stuttering in a speech sample.
6. Participants will be able to develop therapy plans that address these broader behavioral changes for sustainable communication success.

Disclosures:

Jack Henderson has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Jack Henderson MS CCC-SLP (he/him) is a stutterer and owner of Henderson Stuttering Therapy, PLLC. Jack is a co-leader of the Nashville NSA chapter. Jack is on the board of SPACE, an international stuttering advocacy organization and Unscripted, a non-profit focused on empowering people through equitable access to improv. He is an adjunct professor at Austin Peay State University. He lives in Nashville, TN with his spouse and two children.

4:30-5:30 (1 Instructional Hour)

Amanda Cox, MS, CCC-SLP, Lydia Barry, MS, CCC-SLP, and Katie Akers, MS, CCC-SLP

From Strategies to Support: A Practical Framework for Caregiver Coaching in Early Intervention

Course Abstract:

Because children in early intervention spend most of their time with primary caregivers, caregiver coaching is a cornerstone of early intervention. Yet clinicians enter the field without structured guidance on coaching. This session presents an innovative framework that integrates instructional strategies designed for individuals with autism from the SCERTS model with Family-Guided Routines-Based Intervention (FGRBI) to support meaningful caregiver coaching. The combined model provides clinicians, especially those new to coaching, with concrete, replicable strategies for embedding caregiver support within naturalistic routines. Participants will explore how this framework bridges evidence-based instructional practices with a coaching mindset applicable across early intervention settings.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate concrete coaching practices (e.g., modeling, guided practice, feedback) that support caregiver confidence and carryover across early intervention settings.
2. Apply an evidenced framework to embed replicable caregiver-coaching strategies within everyday, natural routines.
3. Identify practical resources to support caregiver acquisition of evidenced based instructional strategies.

Disclosures:

Amanda Cox has a relevant financial relationship with The University of Tennessee Health Science Center in the form of salary for employment. She has a relevant financial relationship with Imprint Therapy Services in the form of ownership interest as the practice owner. Amanda Cox has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Lydia Barry has a relevant financial relationship with The University of Tennessee Health Science Center in the form of salary for employment. Lydia Barry has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Katie Akers has a relevant financial relationship with The University of Tennessee Health Science Center in the form of salary for employment. Katie Akers has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Amanda Cox has a background of working in pediatric private practice and school-based services, with a focus on serving autistic individuals and children with genetic and neurogenic diagnoses. Ms. Cox provides clinical supervision to graduate students through UT Pediatric

Language Clinic. Her interests include Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) and Autism.

Lydia Barry is a speech-language pathologist and clinical faculty member at UT Health Sciences. She serves as the program coordinator of the UT Pediatric Language Clinic. Her interests include early social-communication development, augmentative alternative communication (AAC), caregiver-mediated intervention and mental health aspects of clinical practice.

Katie Akers has a background in school-based services and early intervention, primarily serving autistic children and their families. Katie has been with UT Health Sciences since 2019. In her current role, she provides clinical supervision to graduate students in the UT Pediatric Language Clinic Center Based program.

5:40-6:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Poster Session

Poster 1:

Rachel Marler, BS, Jill Oatsvall, BS, and Bess Sirmon-Taylor, PhD, CCC-SLP

Appalachian vernacular and the influence on patterns of speech and language

Course Objectives:

1. Describe patterns of Appalachian regional variations in speech and language
2. Distinguish between accent, dialect, and vernacular differences
3. Assess and interpret difference versus disorder in the presence of Appalachian variations

Disclosures:

Rachel Marler has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Rachel Marler has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Jill Oatsvall has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Jill Oatsvall has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Bess Sirmon-Taylor has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of salary for employment. Bess Sirmon-Taylo has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Poster 2:

Presenter: Megan Guidry, BS

Additional Authors: Frances Collins, BS, Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

Sound Intensity Alters Complex Auditory Pain Behaviors in Mice

Course Objectives:

1. Identify current challenges with identifying sound-evoked pain behaviors in the clinic.
2. Correlate positional and movement measurements to sound-evoked complex pain behavior.
3. Discuss clinical applications for the non-invasive behavioral classification of auditory pain behaviors.

Disclosures:

Megan Guidry has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Frances Collins has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Poster 3:

Presenter: Lucy Wu

Additional Authors: Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

3D Quantification of Mouse Nose Tip Movement as a Behavioral Measure of Pain Responses in Hyperacusis

Course Objectives:

1. Visualize sound-evoked behavioral responses in mice using an interactive 3D plot generated in R from tracking data with DeepLabCut.
2. Quantify changes in mouse movement across sound intensities from 50 to 90 dB, using nose-tip X and Y coordinates and the video frame number as the Z-axis.

3. Analyze movement clustering and reduced-movement patterns in the 3D plots to identify behavioral differences across sound intensities and evaluate their potential as non-invasive indicators of sound-evoked pain.

Disclosures:

Lucy Wu has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

MEDICAL/ ADULT SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SESSIONS

8:00-9:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Kristy Weissling, SLPD, CCC-SLP

Supporting individuals with Aphasia using Augmentative and Alternative Communication Strategies Part I

Course Abstract:

Individuals with aphasia often experience significant barriers to communication that affect participation in healthcare, social relationships, employment, and daily life. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies can play a critical role in supporting communication, reducing frustration, and promoting engagement across settings. This presentation will explore practical AAC approaches for adults with aphasia, including both low-tech and high-tech supports. It will focus on the reason why AAC for individuals with aphasia poses such a challenge. Participants will be provided an overview about how to incorporate multimodal communication strategies, partner-supported techniques, visual supports, and technology-based tools into assessment and intervention. Through clinical examples, attendees will gain practical, evidence-informed strategies that can be immediately implemented to improve communication success and participation for individuals living with aphasia.

Course Objectives:

1. Explain why AAC should be considered as part of aphasia management.
2. Compare several low-tech and high tech AAC supports commonly used with adults with aphasia.
3. Apply practical AAC strategies to improve communicative success for individuals with aphasia.

Disclosures:

Kristy Weissling has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Kristy Weissling, SLP.D., CCC-SLP, is the Director of the Pi Beta Phi Rehabilitation Institute and Professor (Clinical Track) in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at Vanderbilt Health. Her clinical and scholarly focus centers on adult acquired language and cognitive disorders, with particular emphasis on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Dr. Weissling is also Professor of Practice Emerita in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She has experience in clinical supervision, teaching, and research related to AAC for individuals with aphasia. Previously, she

served as Interim Chair of the Department, Program Director for Speech-Language Pathology, and Clinic Coordinator for Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

9:10-10:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Kristy Weissling, SLPD, CCC-SLP

Supporting individuals with Aphasia using Augmentative and Alternative Communication Strategies Part II

Course Abstract:

Individuals with aphasia often experience significant barriers to communication that affect participation in healthcare, social relationships, employment, and daily life. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies can play a critical role in supporting communication, reducing frustration, and promoting engagement across settings. This presentation will explore practical AAC approaches for adults with aphasia, including both low-tech and high-tech supports. It will focus on the reason why AAC for individuals with aphasia poses such a challenge. Participants will be provided an overview about how to incorporate multimodal communication strategies, partner-supported techniques, visual supports, and technology-based tools into assessment and intervention. Through clinical examples, attendees will gain practical, evidence-informed strategies that can be immediately implemented to improve communication success and participation for individuals living with aphasia.

Course Objectives:

4. Explain why AAC should be considered as part of aphasia management.
5. Compare several low-tech and high tech AAC supports commonly used with adults with aphasia.
6. Apply practical AAC strategies to improve communicative success for individuals with aphasia.

Disclosures:

Kristy Weissling has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Kristy Weissling, SLP.D., CCC-SLP, is the Director of the Pi Beta Phi Rehabilitation Institute and Professor (Clinical Track) in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at Vanderbilt Health. Her clinical and scholarly focus centers on adult acquired language and cognitive disorders, with particular emphasis on augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Dr. Weissling is also Professor of Practice Emerita in the Department of Special Education and Communication Disorders at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. She has experience in clinical supervision, teaching, and research related to AAC for individuals with aphasia. Previously, she served as Interim Chair of the Department, Program Director for Speech-Language Pathology, and Clinic Coordinator for Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

10:10-10:40 Break

10:40-11:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Elizabeth Norberg, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Rating Acute Laryngeal Injury: A Novel Scale for SLP and ENT

Course Abstract:

Acute laryngeal injury (ALgI) is a recognized consequence of prolonged intubation that can delay extubation, trach decannulation and restoration of voice, cough, and swallow function. Early detection of ALgI is crucial in advocating for ENT intervention. Left untreated, severe injuries can progress to posterior glottic stenosis (PGS) which can have long-term impacts on breathing and voice. SLPs and ENTs created a novel scale to grade severity of laryngeal injury on endoscopic evaluation to assist in determining the injuries that warrant ENT intervention. This session will review the development of the scale and how it is applied in the clinical setting during routine flexible endoscopic evaluation of swallowing (FEES). This scale has demonstrated interrater reliability amongst both ENTs and SLPs.

Course Objectives:

1. Summarize short-and long-term complications from acute laryngeal injury (ALgI) and how early intervention can help with clinical management
2. Identify and rate ALgI using the Laryngeal Injury Scale to determine if a patient would benefit from early ENT interventions to prevent long term complications such as posterior glottic stenosis
3. Explain the benefit of FEES in early identification of ALgI in addition to standard swallow assessment

Disclosures:

Elizabeth Norberg has a financial relationship with Vanderbilt University Medical Center in the form of salary for employment. Elizabeth Norberg has no non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Elizabeth Norberg is a Board-Certified Specialist in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders working as an acute care medical speech-language pathologist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She earned her master's degree from University of Alabama in 2006. Elizabeth's specialties include: diagnostics and treatment of swallow dysfunction in medically complex patients, artificial airways, and FEES for upper aerodigestive tract assessment.

Lunch 11:40-1:00
(Awards, Scholarships, Student Spirit Competition)

1:00-2:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Caroline Gammill, SLPD, CCC-SLP, CBIS

Making Sense of Attention, Memory, and Executive Function: Improving Clinical Reasoning in Adult Neurogenic Disorders

Course Abstract:

Attention, memory, and executive-function impairments frequently overlap in adults with neurogenic cognitive-communication disorders, making it challenging to determine what is driving a patient's functional difficulties—and what to do about it. A patient who appears to have a memory problem may actually be struggling to encode information because of impaired attention, while another may remember what to do but have difficulty initiating, planning, or monitoring performance.

This practical, clinically focused session will help speech-language pathologists move from identifying cognitive deficits to reasoning through the mechanisms underlying functional breakdowns and selecting appropriate intervention strategies. Participants will learn how to differentiate patterns of attention, memory, and executive-function impairment; identify the additional information needed to guide clinical decisions; and connect assessment findings to treatment priorities.

Evidence-informed intervention approaches will be translated into practical clinical tools, including restorative approaches, compensatory and environmental supports, error-controlled learning and systematic instruction, external cognitive aids, and metacognitive strategy training. Case examples will be used throughout the session to demonstrate how clinicians can select and sequence strategies based on the patient's cognitive profile, functional goals, context, and response to intervention. Emphasis will be placed not simply on what intervention to use, but why, when, and for whom—supporting cognitive rehabilitation that is individualized, functional, and designed for carryover beyond the therapy session.

Course Objectives:

1. Differentiate attention, memory, and executive-function impairments using clinical presentation, task performance, and functional patterns in adults with neurogenic cognitive-communication disorders.
2. Apply a clinical-reasoning process to identify likely mechanisms contributing to cognitive-communication breakdowns and determine appropriate intervention priorities.
3. Select and implement evidence-informed restorative, compensatory, environmental, and metacognitive strategies for attention, memory, and executive-function deficits based on individual patient needs and functional goals.

Disclosures:

Caroline Gammill has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Caroline Gammill, SLPD, CCC-SLP, CBIS, is an Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Pepperdine University and a practicing speech-language pathologist specializing in adult neurogenic cognitive-communication disorders. Her clinical and teaching interests center on cognitive rehabilitation, clinical reasoning, and helping clinicians bridge the gap between knowing the evidence and knowing what to actually do with the person in front of them. She especially enjoys making complex topics like attention, memory, and executive function practical, approachable, and immediately useful in clinical practice.

2:10-3:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Courtney A. Wright, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCBA-D

Ethical interdisciplinary care: humility, assumed competence, and leading with curiosity

Course Abstract:

As speech-language pathologists, we are rarely the only professionals at the table, and that's a good thing. But working across disciplines, especially with BCBAs, families, and AAC users, requires more than shared goals. It requires a foundation of professional humility, a genuine commitment to assuming competence in every client, and the curiosity to ask questions before drawing conclusions. This session draws on 15 years of clinical and leadership experience, and the rare vantage point of holding both an SLP license and BCBA certification, to explore how ethical interdisciplinary practice can transform outcomes for young children and their families. Through real-world scenarios and family-centered frameworks, participants will examine the ethical codes that guide our work, where they align across disciplines, and how to lead with integrity when they diverge.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify at least two ethical principles from ASHA's Code of Ethics that support collaborative, family-centered practice with BCBAs and other interdisciplinary team members.
2. Apply the principles of assumed competence and professional humility to AAC decision-making and goal planning in interdisciplinary team settings.
3. Demonstrate a curiosity-led approach to navigating scope-of-practice tensions and family concerns in at least one case-based scenario.

Disclosures:

Courtney Wright has a relevant financial relationship as the owner of Kidpro Pediatric Therapies. Courtney Wright has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Dr. Courtney Wright is a Speech Language Pathologist and Board Certified Behavior Analyst, and Founder & CEO of Kidpro Pediatric Therapies in Nashville, TN. She leads an interdisciplinary clinical team delivering speech-language, ABA, and occupational therapy services under one roof. Dr. Wright earned her PhD in Special Education from Vanderbilt University, where her research focused on communication intervention for young children with Down syndrome and autism, and has published and presented widely on naturalistic language intervention.

3:20-4:20 (1 Instructional Hour)

Jan Ward, CCC-SLP, CDP, RAC-CTA, QCP, OHCC

Finding Your Voice in Palliative Care: The Speech-Language Pathologist's Role in Enhancing Quality of Life

Course Abstract:

Finding Your Voice in Palliative Care: The Speech-Language Pathologist's Role in Enhancing Quality of Life explores the vital role of speech-language pathologists in supporting individuals with serious illness. This session examines dysphagia management, communication and cognitive-linguistic interventions, and the ethical considerations surrounding aspiration risk, patient autonomy, and informed decision-making. Through evidence-based practice, real-world case studies, and practical strategies, participants will gain tools to confidently collaborate with interdisciplinary teams, educate patients and families, and develop patient-centered treatment plans that prioritize dignity, comfort, and quality of life across the continuum of care.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Define the role of the SLP within palliative and end-of-life care.
2. Differentiate restorative therapy goals from palliative care goals in dysphagia and communication management.
3. Identify ethical considerations related to aspiration risk, diet recommendations, and patient autonomy.
4. Apply interdisciplinary strategies to support patient-centered care planning.

Disclosures:

Jan Ward has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Jan Ward, MA, CCC-SLP, CDP, RAC-CTA, QCP, OHCC, is the Director of Quality Improvement and Education for QRM and has more than 30 years of experience in post-acute care. She is a nationally recognized speaker and healthcare leader with expertise in quality improvement, regulatory compliance, clinical education, and interdisciplinary leadership. Jan serves as the Tennessee ASHA State Advocate for Medicare Policy (StAMP), Advocacy Chair for the Tennessee Association of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (TAASLP), and a Professional Development Committee member for ASHA SIG 15. She is currently pursuing her clinical doctorate in speech-language pathology with an emphasis in Health Professions Education. Passionate about mentoring clinicians and advancing evidence-based practice, Jan enjoys equipping speech-language pathologists with practical tools that improve patient outcomes and enhance quality of life.

4:30-5:30 (1 Instructional Hour)

Catherine Castillo, MA, CCC-SLP

Why It Matters: Translating Neuroanatomy into Functional Impact and Risk in SLP Practice

Course Abstract:

Speech-language pathologists frequently identify cognitive-communication impairments, yet documentation often fails to translate these findings into functional consequences that influence medical decision-making and discharge planning. This presentation reviews both traditional and contemporary models of neuroanatomy, moving beyond localization of brain function to an understanding of distributed neural networks and their role in cognition, communication, and functional independence. Participants will explore how injury patterns and network disruption contribute to deficits in attention, memory, executive functioning, insight, and communication, and how these deficits manifest in everyday activities and safety risks. Through clinical case studies and practical documentation examples, attendees will learn to connect neuroanatomical findings to functional outcomes, generate meaningful risk statements, and develop

recommendations that support interdisciplinary care and discharge disposition decisions. Emphasis will be placed on translating assessment findings into clear, actionable documentation that improves communication with physicians, nursing, and case management teams

Course Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the relationship between neuroanatomical injury and functional cognitive-communication deficits and apply this framework to assessment, treatment planning, and documentation,
2. Describe why impairment-based cognitive scores alone are insufficient for discharge planning and how functional risk language improves medical decision-making.
3. Generate concise functional recommendations that link cognitive deficits to real-world outcomes (e.g., supervision needs, medication safety, discharge barriers)

Disclosures:

Catherine Castillo has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Catherine (Cat) Castillo, MA, CCC-SLP is a Speech-Language Pathologist at Orlando Health Cancer Institute specializing in dysphagia, head and neck cancer, neuro-oncology, and cognitive-communication disorders. With nearly a decade of clinical experience across acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, and oncology settings, she is dedicated to evidence-based, patient-centered care and interdisciplinary collaboration. Cat also serves as an Adjunct Graduate Clinical Instructor at the University of Central Florida, where she mentors future clinicians and promotes evidence-based practice. She is MBSImP-certified, a Certified Brain Injury Specialist, an active presenter at state and health system conferences, and a leader of both the Orlando Health Cancer Institute Journal Club and Dysphagia Special Interest Group and co-facilitator in the Orlando Health Awake Craniotomy Program.

5:40-6:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Poster Session

Poster 1:

Rachel Marler, BS, Jill Oatsvall, BS, and Bess Sirmon-Taylor, PhD, CCC-SLP

Appalachian vernacular and the influence on patterns of speech and language

Course Objectives:

1. Describe patterns of Appalachian regional variations in speech and language

2. Distinguish between accent, dialect, and vernacular differences
3. Assess and interpret difference versus disorder in the presence of Appalachian variations

Disclosures:

Rachel Marler has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Rachel Marler has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Jill Oatsvall has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Jill Oatsvall has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Bess Sirmon-Taylor has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of salary for employment. Bess Sirmon-Taylo has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Poster 2:

Presenter: Megan Guidry, BS

Additional Authors: Frances Collins, BS, Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

Sound Intensity Alters Complex Auditory Pain Behaviors in Mice

Course Objectives:

1. Identify current challenges with identifying sound-evoked pain behaviors in the clinic.
2. Correlate positional and movement measurements to sound-evoked complex pain behavior.
3. Discuss clinical applications for the non-invasive behavioral classification of auditory pain behaviors.

Disclosures:

Megan Guidry has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Frances Collins has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Poster 3:

Presenter: Lucy Wu

Additional Authors: Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

3D Quantification of Mouse Nose Tip Movement as a Behavioral Measure of Pain Responses in Hyperacusis

Course Objectives:

1. Visualize sound-evoked behavioral responses in mice using an interactive 3D plot generated in R from tracking data with DeepLabCut.
2. Quantify changes in mouse movement across sound intensities from 50 to 90 dB, using nose-tip X and Y coordinates and the video frame number as the Z-axis.
3. Analyze movement clustering and reduced-movement patterns in the 3D plots to identify behavioral differences across sound intensities and evaluate their potential as non-invasive indicators of sound-evoked pain.

Disclosures:

Lucy Wu has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

AUDIOLOGY/MUSIC SESSIONS

8:00-9:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Megan Beers Wood, PhD

Clinic to Cochlea: Connecting Pt Experience with Mouse Models of Pain Hyperacusis

Course Abstract:

Pain hyperacusis, characterized by sound-evoked physical pain, significantly impacts quality of life but remains poorly understood. Bridging the gap between clinical observations and underlying mechanisms is essential for developing targeted interventions. This presentation will synthesize current clinical knowledge with emerging basic science findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of pain hyperacusis, from population-level patterns to cellular mechanisms. Diagnostic criteria and prevalence data across patient populations will be reviewed and recent genetic findings from two independent biobanks that identify potential risk alleles for hyperacusis will be explored. Building on evidence linking noise exposure to hyperacusis development in humans, translational animal models using noise-induced hyperacusis in mice will be presented. Using a novel behavioral assay that quantifies sound-evoked pain responses, we show changes to pain behaviors in noise-exposed animals. Investigation of inner ear pathology reveals unexpected changes at the outer hair cell synapse, including increased synaptic density following noise exposure. By connecting clinical phenotypes with genetic susceptibility and peripheral auditory mechanisms, this work provides a framework for exploring pain hyperacusis pathophysiology to inform future therapeutic intervention.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Define pain hyperacusis and identify key diagnostic criteria.
2. Identify genetic risk factors and synaptic mechanisms that may contribute to pain hyperacusis development.
3. Recognize potential contributions of the peripheral and central auditory pathways in the development of hyperacusis.

Disclosures:

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Speaker Bio(s):

Megan Beers Wood, PhD combines her training in immunology with her postdocs in auditory neuroscience to study basic mechanisms of hearing. She is also passionate about teaching the creativity that science requires through mentoring. The Hearing Response Mechanisms through Observations of Neuro-Immunity in the Cochlea (HARMONIC) Laboratory, uses a combination of techniques including fluorescent imaging, flow cytometry, and deep neural network analysis of facial grimace and movement to understand how the immune system and neurons of the cochlea interact after exposure to loud noise. The long-term goal of Dr. Beers Wood's research is to develop interventions to prevent or treat noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) or NIHL associated conditions such as pain hyperacusis.

9:10-10:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Amy Conner, AuD, PhD

Octave-Band Sound Evokes Pain-like Behavior in Mice

Course Abstract:

Humans report an auditory pain threshold of approximately 120 dB (Sherlock and Formby, 2005). It has been assumed that the auditory pain threshold is similar in animals including mice. Thus, loud sound exposure has been used to induce hearing loss (Noise-Induced Hearing Loss, NIHL). In a previous study, 100 dB of broadband noise (2-20 kHz) caused significant behavioral changes associated with pain. A machine-learning-guided assay called the Behavioral Inventory of Mouse Affective Pain (BIOMAP) was used to score the facial grimace and movement behavior of mice from video during sound presentations interleaved with silence. Animals with a significant change in behavior in both facial grimace and movement were considered to be in sound-evoked pain. In this study, we used an octave noise band (8-16 kHz) to test the effect of a restricted frequency band on sound-evoked pain behavior. 90 dB was sufficient to induce significant behavioral change in both facial grimace and movement scores. This study highlights the impact of spectrum-level sound on the cochlea and its effect on sound-evoked pain behavior

Course Objectives:

Following this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe behavioral indicators of sound-evoked pain in mice, including changes in facial grimace and movement behavior measured using BIOMAP.
2. Explain how sound level and frequency bandwidth influence pain-like behavioral responses to acoustic exposure.
3. Discuss how findings from animal models of sound-evoked pain may inform our understanding of painful sound perception and sound tolerance in humans.

Disclosures:

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Amy Conner is a postdoctoral researcher in the HARMONIC Laboratory at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She earned her Au.D. and Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University and is an audiologist and hearing scientist. Her research focuses on auditory dysfunction and hearing loss, with an emphasis on translational approaches to understanding the biological mechanisms underlying auditory injury and disease.

10:10-10:40 Break

10:40-11:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Marc Fagelson, PhD

Tinnitus, Hearing Loss, and Disorders of Sound Tolerance in the Music-Exposed Population

Course Abstract:

Music is one of the few routinely-experienced sounds present in well-attended environments at hazardous listening levels. As such, music listening has potential to affect hearing sensitivity, tinnitus, and sound tolerance disorders for individuals exposed occupationally and/or recreationally. This presentation offers historical perspectives regarding unique elements of music creation and consumption that may influence risky listening habits among professionals from diverse musical backgrounds. Results from a survey completed by 1138 music-exposed individuals will be presented, in addition to considerations for clinicians who serve the music-exposed population.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify aspects of music listening that elevate risk of overexposure;
2. Report prevalence rates for auditory-related disorders in music-exposed patients;
3. Identify strategies and resources to support audiologic rehabilitative needs in music-exposed patients

Disclosures:

Marc Fagelson has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of salary for employment. Marc Fagelson has a relevant non-financial relationship with the American Tinnitus Association in the form of board membership and chair of the Advisory Committee.

Speaker Bio(s):

Marc Fagelson, PhD, is a Professor of Audiology at East TN State University in Johnson City, TN. He supervises students in audiology and humanitarian clinics, specialty tinnitus clinics, and teaches classes in audiologic assessment, pathologies, medical audiology, and tinnitus management. Fagelson currently chairs the American Tinnitus Association's Scientific Advisory Committee.

Lunch 11:40-1:00
(Awards, Scholarships, Student Spirit Competition)

1:00-2:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Hasan Saleh, PhD, Patrick Plyler, PhD, and Jennifer Hausladen, AuD

Hearing Aid Music Programs: Automatic Switching Accuracy and Listener Benefit

Course Abstract:

This presentation describes two related studies examining hearing aid processing of music. The first evaluated automatic music classification accuracy across basic and premium hearing aid technology levels, pop and classical music, and front versus surround speaker configurations. Classification accuracy varied by music genre and speaker configuration but did not differ between technology levels. The second study examined listeners' ratings of the pleasantness, naturalness, and overall impression of music processed using automatic and dedicated music programs under the same conditions. Technology level did not affect ratings, although significant interactions among technology level, speaker configuration, and program were observed across all three outcomes. Together, these findings suggest that music classification accuracy and perceived sound quality represent distinct aspects of hearing aid performance and that the benefits of dedicated music programs may depend on the listening environment and the type of music being listened to.

Course Objectives:

1. Upon completion, participants will be able to describe the strengths and limitations of current automatic music classification.
2. Upon completion, participants will be able to identify how technology level, music genre, and listening environment influence hearing aid music classification accuracy and subjective user ratings.
3. Upon completion, participants will be able to apply the knowledge of these limitations to form more realistic expectations of the hearing aid music classification accuracy.

Disclosures:

Hasan Saleh has a relevant financial relationship with Rod and Karen Bunn in the form of private donations to support salary, subject compensation, equipment, and travel. Hasan Saleh has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Patrick Plyler has a relevant financial relationship with Rod and Karen Bunn in the form of private donations to support salary, subject compensation, equipment, and travel. Patrick Plyler has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Jennifer Hausladen as no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Hasan Saleh, PhD, is an assistant professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. His research focuses on improving patient outcomes by examining hearing aid user experiences, emerging hearing technologies, and the development of patient-oriented tools. This work emphasizes the adoption of evidence-based, patient-centered approaches in hearing healthcare.

Patrick N. Plyler is a professor of Audiology and Speech Pathology and director of the hearing instrument laboratory at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. He completed his Bachelor of Science in speech-language/auditory pathology at East Carolina University and his Master of Arts in audiology and Doctor of Philosophy in Speech and Hearing Science at the University of Tennessee. His research interests are in the areas of speech perception deficits in listeners with impaired hearing, the efficacy and effectiveness of advanced features in hearing instruments, and acceptance of background noise.

Jennifer Hausladen, Au.D, is an Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. She provides diagnostic and hearing aid services to the adult population. She also provides tinnitus and vestibular evaluations and treatment. Her research interests include hearing aids, music, tinnitus, and vestibular issues.

2:10-3:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Jason Baker, AuD

Music Audiology in Practice: Clinical Cases and a Hearing Conservation Plan Framework

Course Abstract:

Musicians and other music industry professionals face occupational noise exposure risks that traditional audiology training rarely addresses. This session introduces music audiology as a clinical specialty and a practical roadmap for incorporating it into everyday practice.

Through real clinical cases, Dr. Baker will review clinical profiles seen in working musicians, from custom IEM fitting and hearing protection selection to early signs of noise-induced changes, along with the clinical reasoning behind each intervention. These cases illustrate the range of decisions audiologists face when serving musician patients, and how those decisions differ from standard hearing healthcare.

The session's centerpiece is a hearing conservation plan framework developed for music industry patients. Attendees will see the plan's structure and outcome data collected from its use in practice, giving a concrete look at what a conservation program can achieve when built around musicians' actual working conditions. Dr. Baker will also introduce an IEM and earplug fit-testing approach attendees can implement directly in their own practice as a new service.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this session, attendees will be able to:

1. implement the key components of a music-focused evaluation and appointment
2. understand the structure of a hearing conservation plan framework and how to adapt it for their own practice, and
3. apply an IEM and earplug fit-testing protocol as an immediate addition to their clinical services.

Disclosures:

Jason Baker has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Jason Baker has a relevant non-financial relationship with Music City Audiology as the developer/creator of the "Hearing Conservation Plan" tool and "IEM/Earplug Fit-Testing Protocol."

Speaker Bio(s):

Dr. Jason Baker is a Doctor of Audiology and founder of Music City Audiology (MCA), a mobile, concierge audiology practice based in Nashville, TN. Dr. Baker earned his Au.D. from the University of Texas at Dallas and launched MCA in 2023 to bring audiological care directly to patients. MCA offers traditional audiology services alongside a specialty in music audiology, serving musicians and music industry professionals.

3:20-4:20 (1 Instructional Hour)

Eva Hampton, MA, CCC-SLP, Carla Monroe, MS, CCC-SLP, and Ginny Willis, Special Education Paraprofessional and SLPA Student

Don't Forget the Music! Get Them Talking When You Use It!

Course Abstract:

Ever notice how students can remember every word to a favorite song but struggle to remember therapy targets? This session explores how to use that natural connection to music to improve communication skills in fun, meaningful ways. Participants will learn easy strategies for using familiar songs, parody-style adaptations, rhythm, repetition, visuals, movement, and environmental supports to target speech and language goals while increasing engagement and carryover. Practical ideas involving pacing, setup, mirrors for visual feedback, and creative therapy activities will be shared throughout this encouraging and interactive session. Simple, doable ideas will be shared for all comfort levels.

Course Objectives:

1. Describe at least three environmental or presentation strategies (e.g., planning music, structuring the environment, pacing, use of visuals, props, or movement) that support effective use of music during speech-language intervention.
2. Identify at least five speech, language, academic, behavioral, or life skills that can be targeted through the use of music.
3. Choose music from a variety of sources to support at least three individualized speech or language goals.

Disclosures:

Eva Hampton has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Carla Monroe has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Ginny Willis has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Eva Hampton, MA, CCC-SLP, is a University of Tennessee Knoxville alumna and speech-language pathologist who has practiced since 1998. She enjoys sharing practical, encouraging ideas that help therapists, caregivers, and families build communication skills into everyday moments. Her son Wyatt, who has Down syndrome, continues to inspire both her work and presentations.

Carla Monroe, MS, CCC-SLP serves students ages 3-22 in Meigs County Schools. She is passionate about creating engaging, functional therapy experiences and enjoys incorporating music into speech and language intervention to support attention, participation, communication growth, and confidence across a variety of ages and ability levels.

Ginny Willis is a mother to 3 daughters. She has worked in special education for 11 years and has developed a love for speech therapy during this time. She is currently pursuing her degree and licensure as a Speech-Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA) and is passionate about supporting communication development in children and families

4:30-5:30 (1 Instructional Hour)

Carla Facer, MS, AuD and Brittany Seiffert, AuD

From Hearing to Harmony: Optimizing MED-EL Cochlear Implant Technology for Music Enjoyment

Course Abstract:

In the everyday world, there is more to listening than understanding speech in quiet. It's music, laughter, whispers, and all the sounds that make life unique. To access this full range of sounds, we need technology that can enhance music enjoyment, sound quality and listening in noise. MED-EL has unique tools to address loudness, pitch, and timing to give patients the opportunity to have a more natural sound quality experience. What does this mean for you and your patients? More informed programming in the software and enhanced sound quality for your recipients!

Course Objectives:

1. Define OTOPLAN and its clinic functionality
2. Define Fine Structure Processing
3. List the steps for applying Anatomy-Based Fitting

Disclosures:

Carla Facer has a relevant financial relationship with MED-EL corporation in the form of salary for employment. Carla Facer has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Brittany Seiffert has a relevant financial relationship with MED-EL corporation in the form of salary for employment. Brittany Seiffert has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Carla Facer earned her Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders, with a minor in Human Development and Family Studies, from Colorado State University. She went on to complete a Master of Science in Audiology at Purdue University in 1996, and later received her Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) from the University of Florida in 2004.

Over her extensive career, Carla has held a variety of impactful roles across the audiology field. She spent 21 years at Cochlear Americas in several positions, followed by a dual role at Earlens as both Territory Manager and Professional Education Manager. She also served as Director of Audiology and Customer Care at Songs for Sound, a nonprofit where she volunteered her expertise to support individuals with hearing loss.

Her passion for audiology—particularly in cochlear implants—was inspired by her father, Dr. George Facer, whose pioneering efforts led to the launch of the cochlear implant program at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester in 1982.

In 2024, Carla joined MED-EL as a Clinical Account Manager for the Southeast region, where she provides clinical support and training throughout Middle Tennessee and Alabama.

Brittany Seiffert Au.D., is a Clinical Account Manager with MED-EL corporation. She previously worked as a clinical audiologist with pediatrics and adults and was the Implant Coordinator with her program. She received her bachelor's in Communication Disorders from Auburn University and her Doctorate of Audiology from University of Louisville.

5:40-6:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Poster Session

Poster 1:

Rachel Marler, BS, Jill Oatsvall, BS, and Bess Sirmon-Taylor, PhD, CCC-SLP

Appalachian vernacular and the influence on patterns of speech and language

Course Objectives:

1. Describe patterns of Appalachian regional variations in speech and language
2. Distinguish between accent, dialect, and vernacular differences
3. Assess and interpret difference versus disorder in the presence of Appalachian variations

Disclosures:

Rachel Marler has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Rachel Marler has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Jill Oatsvall has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Jill Oatsvall has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Bess Sirmon-Taylor has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of salary for employment. Bess Sirmon-Taylo has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Poster 2:

Presenter: Megan Guidry, BS

Additional Authors: Frances Collins, BS, Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

Sound Intensity Alters Complex Auditory Pain Behaviors in Mice

Course Objectives:

1. Identify current challenges with identifying sound-evoked pain behaviors in the clinic.
2. Correlate positional and movement measurements to sound-evoked complex pain behavior.
3. Discuss clinical applications for the non-invasive behavioral classification of auditory pain behaviors.

Disclosures:

Megan Guidry has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Frances Collins has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Poster 3:

Presenter: Lucy Wu

Additional Authors: Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

3D Quantification of Mouse Nose Tip Movement as a Behavioral Measure of Pain Responses in Hyperacusis

Course Objectives:

1. Visualize sound-evoked behavioral responses in mice using an interactive 3D plot generated in R from tracking data with DeepLabCut.
2. Quantify changes in mouse movement across sound intensities from 50 to 90 dB, using nose-tip X and Y coordinates and the video frame number as the Z-axis.
3. Analyze movement clustering and reduced-movement patterns in the 3D plots to identify behavioral differences across sound intensities and evaluate their potential as non-invasive indicators of sound-evoked pain.

Disclosures:

Lucy Wu has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

PRACTICE/LEGISLATION SESSIONS

8:00-9:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Candyce Wilson candyce.wilson@tn.gov

Understanding Tennessee Licensure: Board Operations, Regulation, and Current Issues

Course Abstract:

This presentation provides an overview of the state licensure board, including its structure, authority, responsibilities, regulatory processes, disciplinary procedures, current ethical issues, and the impact of the Interstate Compact on licensed professionals.

Course Objectives:

1. At the conclusion of this presentation, attendees will be able to describe the structure, statutory authority, mission, and key responsibilities of the state licensure board/department, including the roles of board members and staff.
2. At the conclusion of this presentation, attendees will be able to explain the board's regulatory processes, including meeting transparency, complaint and investigative procedures, and disciplinary actions.
3. At the conclusion of this presentation, attendees will be able to recognize the role of the licensure board in protecting the public and promoting professional standards, accountability, and ethical practice among licensees.

Disclosures:

Candyce Wilson has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Candyce Wilson serves as the Director for six licensing boards and four committees within the Tennessee Department of Health, including the Board of Communication Disorders and Sciences. With more than eleven years of experience in the Division of Licensure and Regulation, she oversees a team of administrators responsible for the daily operations and regulatory functions of professional licensing boards/committees. She is committed to promoting efficient regulatory processes, ensuring compliance with state laws and regulations, and providing exceptional customer service to licensees, board members, and the public.

9:10-10:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Matthew Ward, PhD., CCC-SLP

Are We Practicing Without Consent? Findings From a National Survey of SLPs on Dysphagia Management, Risk Knowledge, and Disclosure Practices

Course Abstract:

Despite limited evidence that they reduce the incidence of aspiration related pneumonia, modified texture diets (MTDs)—including thickened liquids and altered solid consistencies—remain a cornerstone of dysphagia management. In an inpatient setting and when utilized to mitigate the risk of prandial aspiration, MTDs constitute a medical intervention that is recommended by a speech-language pathologist and ordered, or co-signed, by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. As with any medical intervention, recommendations for MTDs require informed consent, including discussion of potential risks, expected benefits, available alternatives, and the option to decline treatment. However, to date, little has been known about whether practicing speech-language pathologists possess sufficient knowledge of the known risks associated with MTDs to fully inform individuals with dysphagia of the risks associated with their use.

This session presents findings from a national survey of practicing speech-language pathologists—examining knowledge of adverse health outcomes associated with MTDs, clinical decision-making practices, and informed consent behaviors. Results demonstrate substantial variability in clinicians' knowledge of documented risks, inconsistent consideration of those risks during treatment planning, and limited disclosure of potential adverse effects during patient counseling. These findings raise important questions regarding patient autonomy, shared decision-making, and the ethical responsibilities of clinicians managing oropharyngeal dysphagia.

Participants will review the study's methodology and key findings, examine their implications for contemporary dysphagia practice, and discuss practical strategies for strengthening informed consent conversations while promoting evidence-based and patient-centered care.

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Describe current evidence regarding modified texture diets, informed consent, and the practice patterns of speech-language pathologists when recommending dietary modification for oropharyngeal dysphagia.
2. Evaluate gaps between current clinical practice and the ethical standards of informed consent, including clinician knowledge of known risks associated with modified texture diets and patterns of risk disclosure.
3. Apply evidence-informed strategies to improve risk communication, shared decision-making, and informed consent when recommending modified texture diets in clinical practice.

Disclosures:

Matt Ward has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Matthew G. Ward, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, is Director of Clinical Education at SA Swallowing Services, a mobile dysphagia evaluation and clinical education company based in Nashville, TN. Dr. Ward performs mobile FEES evaluations across Tennessee and Alabama, completes original clinical research, and oversees curriculum development for a global FEES competency training program. He has taught Basic and Advanced FEES courses throughout the U.S. and internationally, including in Canada, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan.

His research focuses on swallowing, swallowing disorders, and the efficacy of speech-language pathologists' interventions for dysphagia. Dr. Ward serves on the Editorial Board of Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups and as Board Chair of the Tennessee Health Licensure Board for Communication Disorders and Sciences.

10:10-10:40 Break

10:40-11:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Jennifer Henderson, MS, CCC-SLP, Shequria Williams, MS, CCC-SLP, Beth Humphrey, AuD, CCC-A, Jan Ward, MA, CCC-SLP, CDP, RAC-CTA, QCP, OHCC, and Caroline Bergner, JD

Top Legislative Issues Impacting SLPs and AuDs: Advocacy in Action

Course Abstract:

This session will examine current legislative issues impacting speech-language pathologists and audiologists. Participants will explore how these policy areas influence clinical practice, access to care, and professional sustainability. The presentation will translate complex legislative updates into practical implications for SLPs and AuDs. Attendees will also learn how to effectively communicate concerns to legislators through structured advocacy messaging and will be guided in drafting a concise advocacy letter. Emphasis will be placed on turning awareness into action through accessible, real-world engagement strategies for professionals in advocacy practice.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify and describe legislative issues currently impacting SLPs and audiologists.
2. Explain how these legislative issues directly affect clinical practice, access to services, and professional sustainability.

3. Develop and draft an effective advocacy letter to legislators and/or the Department of Health that communicates key professional concerns and actionable requests.

Disclosures:

Jennifer Henderson has a relevant financial relationship with TAASLP as the VP of Legislative Affairs as her convention fees were waived for being a speaker and board member. Jennifer Henderson has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose

Shequria Williams has a relevant financial relationship with TAASLP as her convention fees were waived for being a speaker and SEAL representative. Shequria Williams has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Beth Humphrey has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Beth Humphrey has a relevant non-financial relationship with TAASLP/TAA and ASHA in the form of board and committee membership.

Jan Ward has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Caroline Bergner has a relevant financial relationship with ASHA in the form of salary for employment. Caroline Bergner has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Jennifer Henderson is a CCC, SLP residing in Knoxville Tennessee. She received her Bachelor's and Master's Degree from Valdosta State University. She has been practicing as a SLP for 16 years. She began her career as a CF for Rockdale County Schools, in Conyers, Ga. She began working for Sidekick Therapy Partners, formally known as Curlee Communication Consultants, in 2009.

During her time with Sidekick, Jennifer has provided comprehensive evaluation and therapeutic treatment to adult clients with cognitive and dysphagia challenges through home health services. She has also provided speech and language services to children aged 0-3 years, and conducted speech, language, and fluency evaluations and therapies for HeadStart students and those in preschool through twelfth grade. She also provided speech and language services at a psychiatric residential treatment facility that supported residents with Autism and other Neurodevelopmental diagnoses. Her leadership roles include that of Lead SLP, District Coordinator, and currently, Director of Quality Assurance and Director of Clinical Services at Sidekick.

Shequria Williams is a CCC, SLP residing in Knoxville Tennessee. She received her Bachelor's and Master's Degree from the University of Alabama-Tuscaloosa. She has been practicing as a SLP for 16 years at Sidekick Therapy Partners.

Shequria has provided speech-language evaluations and therapy services across a wide range of settings, including home health, early intervention, Head Start, and school-based programs serving preschool through eighth-grade students. Throughout her career at Sidekick, she has progressed through several leadership positions, including Lead SLP, District Coordinator, Clinical Lead, and currently serves as Senior Director of Clinical Services.

As Sr. Director of Clinical Services, Shequria is responsible for planning and overseeing the delivery of patient care services, developing, updating, and implementing clinical policies and procedures according to company standards for excellent service and growth, consulting with leadership, clinic staff, school clients, TEIS staff, and teammates on patient care and interpretation of policies to ensure teammate and client needs are met, budgeting, and coach Clinical Leads and other Sidekick clinical leaders in clinical situations, providing supervisory crisis coverage when needed.

Shequria is a member of TAASLP,. She is currently representing TAASLP as the SEAL, State Education Advocacy Leader.. She works to tackle issues related to caseload and workload,

SLP shortages in the school system, salary supplements, and maintenance and personal standards in the school setting. She is also the SEAL Champion for the southern US region.

Dr. Beth Humphrey earned her Doctorate in Audiology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. After completing her residency at East Tennessee Children's Hospital, she joined the clinical faculty in the UT Health Science Center Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology in 2005. In addition to diagnostic audiology and amplification, her clinical specialties and research interests include cochlear implants and adult auditory rehabilitation.

Dr. Humphrey is Past President of Tennessee Academy of Audiology and represents Tennessee on ASHA's State Advocates for Medicare Policy (StAMP) network and the Committee of Ambassadors. She participates in the American Academy of Audiology's State Policy Advocacy Network and is an advisor to the UT Chapter of NSSLHA.

Jan Ward, MA, CCC-SLP, CDP, RAC-CTA, QCP, OHCC, is the Director of Quality Improvement and Education for QRM and has more than 30 years of experience in post-acute care. She is a nationally recognized speaker and healthcare leader with expertise in quality improvement, regulatory compliance, clinical education, and interdisciplinary leadership. Jan serves as the Tennessee ASHA State Advocate for Medicare Policy (StAMP), Advocacy Chair for the Tennessee Association of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (TAASLP), and a Professional Development Committee member for the geriatric special interest group. She is currently pursuing her clinical doctorate in speech-language pathology with an emphasis in Health Professions Education. Passionate about mentoring clinicians and advancing evidence-based practice, Jan enjoys equipping speech-language pathologists with practical tools that improve patient outcomes and enhance quality of life.

Caroline Bergner, JD is ASHA's Director of Health Care Policy for Medicaid. She has been with ASHA for four years and has been a staunch supporter of Medicaid and a disability advocate throughout her career.

Lunch 11:40-1:00
(Awards, Scholarships, Student Spirit Competition)

1:00-2:00 (1 Instructional Hour)

Zoe Hussey, MA, CCC-SLP

Breaking Down Silos: Effective SLP-Educator Collaboration to Support Professional and Student Outcomes

Course Abstract:

Collaboration across disciplines, known as interprofessional practice (IPP) improves professional and student outcomes. This session focuses on IPP among speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and educators, and offers practical strategies to support implementation in school settings.

Participants will learn how IPP enhances student academic outcomes, strengthens service delivery, and highlights professional roles. Drawing on current research, this session introduces four components of structured collaboration—cooperation, coordination, cross-fertilization, and integration—and demonstrates how they can be applied using practice-based examples.

Attendees will leave with actionable strategies to improve collaboration, align services, and support integrated service delivery across classroom and therapy contexts.

Course Objectives:

1. Define interprofessional practice (IPP) and distinguish it from traditional collaborative team models
2. Recall four components of structured collaboration
3. Apply practical strategies to support IPP in school settings

Disclosures:

Zoe Hussey has a relevant financial relationship with Vanderbilt University in the form of grant funding for research, stipends, and conference travel. Zoe Hussey has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Zoe Hussey is a doctoral student in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences at Vanderbilt University. Her research focuses on SLP and educator collaboration to support students and the relation between language and behavior. She has clinical experience as a school speech-language pathologist and currently serves as a research assistant in the Vanderbilt Implementation Research Lab. Zoe is funded by OSEP training grant Project INTERSECT.

2:10-3:10 (1 Instructional Hour)

Rebecca L. Jones, EdD, CCC-SLP

When AI Sounds Right But Isn't: Practical and Ethical Guidance for SLPs Navigating AI-Generated Content

Course Abstract:

Artificial intelligence tools are reshaping how speech-language pathologists document, plan, and educate, but AI output that sounds clinically sound sometimes isn't. This session provides speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and clinical educators with practical, evidence-based guidance for evaluating AI-generated content before it enters a patient record, a student assignment, or a published report. Drawing on current research in automation bias, AI hallucination, linguistic bias, and professional ethics, participants will examine what AI does well, where it falls short in clinically-specific contexts, and what professional accountability looks like in an AI-assisted practice. Attendees will leave with concrete strategies applicable to both clinical and educational settings.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify at least three documented limitations of AI-generated content that are specifically relevant to speech-language pathology and audiology practice and clinical education, including hallucination of sources, cultural and linguistic bias, and lack of client-specific reasoning.
2. Apply an evidence-based framework for evaluating AI-assisted content across five domains before submitting or distributing work in clinical or academic contexts.
3. Describe the ethical responsibilities of speech-language pathologists and audiologists under the ASHA Code of Ethics as they relate to AI use in clinical documentation, academic assignments, and professional disclosure.

Disclosures:

Becky Jones has a relevant financial relationship with Oklahoma Baptist University in the form of salary for employment. She additionally has a relevant financial disclosure as she received

grant support for Phase 2 of the research discussed in this presentation. The current phase of the study was not grant funded. Becky Jones has a relevant non-financial relationship with the International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders (IALP) Artificial Intelligence Task Force as a volunteer member. She additionally has a non-financial relationship as the developer and principal researcher of the VIBES AI Checklist which will be discussed in this presentation; no financial interest or compensation associated with the tool.

Speaker Bio(s):

Becky Jones, EdD, CCC-SLP, is Director of Clinical Education and Associate Professor in the MS-SLP program at Oklahoma Baptist University. Her scholarly work focuses on AI ethics, clinical reasoning in the AI era, and the responsible integration of AI into clinical education and professional practice. She also serves on the International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorders (IALP) Artificial Intelligence Task Force.

3:20-4:20 (1 Instructional Hour)

Andrea M. Moore, SLP.D, CCC-SLP

Sustaining Efficient and Effective School-Based Speech-Language Pathology Programs: Mentoring and Supervision

Course Abstract:

School-based speech-language pathology programs face many challenges that impact the retention of clinicians. As more demands are made on districts to remain aligned with compliance and monitoring regulations, intentional mentoring and effective supervision have become essential for long-term program sustainability. This session explores innovative approaches to developing and retaining highly qualified school-based SLPs through meaningful mentorship, purposeful supervision, and collaborative leadership. Participants will examine strategies for supporting both novice and experienced clinicians, strengthening professional growth, and fostering a culture of continuous learning. By thinking beyond traditional supervision models, attendees will discover practical, creative solutions that promote clinician engagement, improve service quality, and build resilient speech-language pathology programs capable of meeting the diverse needs of students and school communities

Course Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify key components of effective mentoring and supervision that promote clinician growth, retention, and high-quality service delivery within school-based speech-language pathology programs.

2. Evaluate innovative and collaborative supervision strategies that address common challenges such as workforce shortages, clinician burnout, and increasing service demands.
3. Explain the 7-eyed supervision style in increasing perspectives in service delivery, workload management, and relationships.

Disclosures:

Andrea Moore has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Andrea Moore has relevant non-financial relationships with Bartlett City Schools and the National Black Association for Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH) Memphis in the form of mentorships and board membership.

Speaker Bio(s):

Dr. Andrea Moore received her Bachelor of Science from Delta State University (Cleveland, MS), her Master of Art from The University of Memphis (Memphis, TN), and her Doctorate of Speech-Language Pathology from Nova Southeastern University (Fort Lauderdale, FL). She has worked in a variety of settings, including schools, acute care, and adjunct professorship. She has mentored graduate clinicians and clinical fellows for more than 15 years. She is affectionately called “the child whisperer” for her ability to work with students classified as preverbal or nonverbal.

She is currently an Exceptional Children Specialist for Bartlett City Schools, where she oversees the management and implementation of over 800 IEPs across five of the district’s eleven schools. She is the 2018-2019 Bartlett City Schools Elementary Teacher of the Year. This is the first time this distinction has been given to a speech-language pathologist. Dr. Moore is also an adjunct professor for Our Lady of the Lake University. Dr. Moore is the chair of the Inaugural Board of the Memphis Area Affiliate of the National Black Association of Speech-Language-Hearing (NBASLH) and has been awarded Professional Advocate of the Year for the National Black Association of Speech-Language-Hearing. She also serves as the chair of the locally recognized non-profit Kifani Kids.

4:30-5:30 (1 Instructional Hour)

Kerry Hankins-Grider M.A. CCC-SLP, ATP

Supporting AAC for Students Transitioning from the School Setting

Course Abstract:

As individuals grow and change, so do their communication needs, abilities, vocabulary, and access methods. For AAC users, communication systems must evolve alongside these changes. This course explores dynamic AAC assessment and re-assessment strategies to

support students transitioning from school to adulthood. Participants will examine functional communication goals that can prepare students for greater independence, identify community resources and communication opportunities, and explore tools within TD Snap that can support evolving needs. Through practical strategies and fictional case studies, learners will apply assessment principles to changes in setting, status, and access, helping ensure continuity of communication beyond the school environment.

Course Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to create functional goals for teens/young adult students transitioning from the school setting.
2. Attendees will be able to find resources and programs to support students with this transition.
3. Attendees will be able to name 2 tools and within an AAC system that can support functional independence for a young adult/teen.

Disclosures:

Kerry Hankins-Grider has a relevant financial relationship with TobiiDynavox in the form of salary for employment. Kerry Hankins-Grider has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Speaker Bio(s):

Kerry Hankins-Grider M.A. CCC-SLP, ATP is a Solutions Consultant with TobiiDynavox. She has 14 years of experience working with children and adults with utilizing Augmentative and Alternative Communication supports. Prior to joining the TobiiDynavox Team, Kerry served as a clinician at the Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center where she administered assessments and provided therapy for children with complex communication needs. She also previously worked as a consultant with the ALS Association of Middle Tennessee.

5:40-6:40 (1 Instructional Hour)

Poster Session

Poster 1:

Rachel Marler, BS, Jill Oatsvall, BS, and Bess Sirmon-Taylor, PhD, CCC-SLP

Appalachian vernacular and the influence on patterns of speech and language

Course Objectives:

1. Describe patterns of Appalachian regional variations in speech and language
2. Distinguish between accent, dialect, and vernacular differences

3. Assess and interpret difference versus disorder in the presence of Appalachian variations

Disclosures:

Rachel Marler has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Rachel Marler has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Jill Oatsvall has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of grant funding. Jill Oatsvall has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Bess Sirmon-Taylor has a relevant financial relationship with East Tennessee State University in the form of salary for employment. Bess Sirmon-Taylo has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.

Poster 2:

Presenter: Megan Guidry, BS

Additional Authors: Frances Collins, BS, Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

Sound Intensity Alters Complex Auditory Pain Behaviors in Mice

Course Objectives:

1. Identify current challenges with identifying sound-evoked pain behaviors in the clinic.
2. Correlate positional and movement measurements to sound-evoked complex pain behavior.
3. Discuss clinical applications for the non-invasive behavioral classification of auditory pain behaviors.

Disclosures:

Megan Guidry has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Frances Collins has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.

Poster 3:

Presenter: Lucy Wu

Additional Authors: Amy Conner, AuD, PhD and Megan Beers Wood, PhD

3D Quantification of Mouse Nose Tip Movement as a Behavioral Measure of Pain Responses in Hyperacusis

Course Objectives:

1. Visualize sound-evoked behavioral responses in mice using an interactive 3D plot generated in R from tracking data with DeepLabCut.
2. Quantify changes in mouse movement across sound intensities from 50 to 90 dB, using nose-tip X and Y coordinates and the video frame number as the Z-axis.
3. Analyze movement clustering and reduced-movement patterns in the 3D plots to identify behavioral differences across sound intensities and evaluate their potential as non-invasive indicators of sound-evoked pain.

Disclosures:

Lucy Wu has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Amy Conner has no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

Megan Beers Wood has no relevant financial relationships to disclose. Megan Beers Wood has a relevant non-financial relationship with Hyperacusis Research, Inc. as a member of the Scientific Advisory Board.