Tune into Membership...

A Letter from the President...

Happy Spring! First and foremost, thank you, our TAASLP members, for making our organization a success. Last year we had an incredible convention in Chattanooga and we are so excited about the number of volunteers willing to participate on various committees! The number of volunteers who want to help overturn the Professional Privilege Tax is overwhelming and we are optimistic that with your help we can accomplish this important legislative change. There is strength in our solidarity, and with the sheer number of supporters we are speaking with one strong voice.

The Professional Privilege Tax is becoming a state-wide issue of interest to several of the professions that have to pay the tax. In March 2016, the Senate Finance Committee approved an amendment that requires the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (TACIR) to complete a study and make recommendations relative to the professional privilege tax. TACIR will study the history and purpose of the PPT and its application to various occupations, businesses, and professions. The amendment has passed the full Senate and House of Representatives and will soon be signed into law by the Governor. The formal study of the PPT will take place later this year and will result in recommendations to the General Assembly. This is great news for us and our voices need to be heard. We will be calling on our members and volunteers this year to make sure the government knows how the PPT impacts audiologists and speech-language pathologists.

We are looking forward to a great year, culminating with our fun and educational convention in Murfreesboro on October 20-21, 2016. If you’re interested in volunteering to help overturn the PPT or serve on a TAASLP committee, please contact info@taaslp.org.

Best,
Jackie Youde

A Letter from the Past President...

As an organization, we have accomplished much over the past few years. Our aim is to educate our members and students, follow trends in the fields of speech-language pathology and audiology, protect our consumers and professionals and pave a way to a better life for those touched by our field. With the skilled guidance of our lobbyist, John Williams, we are in the loop on issues in legislation that we need to address. These areas include scope of practice, licensure and consumer protection issues and many more. He does want our assistance though. Thankfully, many of you provided your information at the recent convention to volunteer. In the education area, we just had an outstanding convention that provided knowledge and skills to both students and professionals. In this area, we all need to thank Dr. Sarah Grantham for coordinating the last two conventions. She did it well and with grace and charm. We owe her much! Much gratitude also goes to Dr. Susan Amberg, our Secretary-Treasurer. Believe me, we could not function without her guidance. She also makes posters, does the CEUs for AAA, stores our stuff all year, sits at the registration table and much more. Lauren English kept our website running (which is incredible) and organized the silent auction. Julie Anne Davis, as always, bakes and keeps the registration table running as well as membership. We will miss you on Executive Council! Dr. Amanda Jones organized the College Bowl teams and student volunteers and Dr. Wanda Webb and Mrs. Patsy Allen were the leaders for the student completion. All the teams were great! Dr. Andrea Rose-Hardison has faithfully kept our ASHA CEUs going and it is a difficult job—thanks! Dr. Laura Gifford organized the TAA speakers as always. We are so fortunate!! Also thanks to all the instructors who donated their time and brains to give such challenging presentations! They made us better and more caring professionals! Last but not the least, we appreciate our vendors! We began a new year in January with Dr. Jackie Youde! We are better than ever! Thanks for joining in the journey!

Susan Logan

Best,
Susan A. Logan,
Past President
ARE YOU A SCHOOL SLP OR AUDIOLOGIST?

If you are YOU need to read this!

Do you have concerns about your workloads/caseloads, salaries, licensure, paperwork demands, Privilege to Practice Tax, current research based intervention strategies or any other pressing issues? TAASLP is here for you! Your state association is here to listen and work with you individually and as a group.

Did you know we have a standing SCHOOLS COMMITTEE? The Public Schools Committee needs you! Currently the committee chair position is vacant. We also need several of you to fill the committee positions. Ideally we like to have individuals from across the state. Your voices need to be heard from Elizabethton to Knoxville to Maryville to Chattanooga to Pulaski to Nashville to Dickson to Memphis and Dresden.

If you are passionate about your profession and concerned about hot issues, please consider joining the Public Schools Committee. You can contact communications@taaslp.org.

We will be represented at our upcoming convention, Oct. 20 and 21, 2016, Murfreesboro, TN with a great school’s track. Several of you voiced your concerns at last year’s convention at our Schools table. With your help we can once again be present and visible at our convention.

IT ONLY TAKES A FEW TO GET THIS COMMITTEE GOING. WHO WILL BE THE FIRST?

Written by:
Paulette Gentry, MS
Tennessee State University (TSU), a public land grant historically Black institution, is home to the Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology. Dedicated to preparing tomorrow’s health care leaders, the Department is housed in the College of Health Sciences (COHS).

The Department’s mission is to provide students with a strong educational environment which facilitates the acquisition of knowledge and skills, encourages intellectual curiosity, engenders awareness of issues in culturally diverse populations and promotes responsible ethical behavior. As a component of its mission, the Department offers the Master of Science (MS) degree in Speech and Hearing Science in both full-time and part-time tracks to a diverse group of students enrolled in either the traditional on-campus program or the Distance Education program.

In accord with the University’s motto of “Think, Work and Serve”, faculty members and graduate students are actively engaged in funded research designed to investigate the efficacy of a variety of treatment approaches while providing services to persons in the community. Under the direction of Dr. Terrie Gibson and Dr. Tina Smith, students are working collaboratively with the Hadley Park Community Center and the Autumn Hills Assisted Living Facility to provide cognitive assessments and cognitive-linguistic enhancement to senior citizens with normal communication skills as well as to provide assessment and intervention services to persons with brain injury.

To assist TSU faculty members, whose English speaking skills differ considerably from their students, to communicate more effectively in the academic setting, Dr. Iris Johnson Arnold and Ms. Sylvia Driggins are organizing a university initiative to help break down communication barriers in the classroom. In addition, Dr. Mary Dale Fitzgerald and Dr. Valeria Matlock have been working with students to assess the literacy skills of hearing impaired children at Bridges.

While creative programming through research is one goal of the TSU Speech Pathology and Audiology Department, our main focus is to promote academic and clinical excellence through interdisciplinary collaboration. As such, as a component of the academic coursework, students have the opportunity to engage in clinical ground rounds lead by outside speech-language pathologists in both medical and school settings, and to participate in interdisciplinary case studies with students from other departments in the COHS.

Service is what the TSU Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology aspires to deliver. Clinical faculty and students in the TSU Speech and Language Clinic serve the community at large but also provide speech and language services to preschool children at Grace Eden and to adults at Goodwill Industries. Additionally, Dr. Matlock is the audiologist in the TSU Audiology Clinic and she provides audiological evaluations to persons in the community in partnership with Hear Nashville and Sertoma and along with students, she provides hearing screenings to thousands of children in the public school system in the Middle Tennessee area.

All work and no play is not a motto that the Department adheres to. We promote a family environment and we like to serve and have fun. The TSU NSSLHA Chapter takes care of business while having a great time. The student organization works tirelessly to raise money annually for the Buddy Walk to support children with Down’s syndrome. They participate in the Ice Bucket Challenge to raise monies for persons with ALS. They also donate hundreds of shoes to the Soles for...
The Tennessee advisory commission on intergovernmental relations (TACIR) is directed to study and make recommendations relative to the professional privilege tax (PPT). TACIR shall study the application of this tax, or its non-application as the case may be, to various occupations, businesses, and professions, whether or not listed in Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 67-4-1702, and the application of this tax on both residents of this state and nonresidents. TACIR shall also study this bill as introduced (Senate Bill 556/ House Bill 678) and the following two (2) additional bills, as introduced and as amended, if applicable: Senate Bill 1919/ House Bill 1952 and Senate Bill 1702, and the application of this tax on both residents of this state and nonresidents. TACIR shall also study this bill as introduced (Senate Bill 556/ House Bill 678) and the following two (2) additional bills, as introduced and as amended, if applicable: Senate Bill 1919/ House Bill 1952 and Senate Bill 167/ House Bill 601. Recommendations will be made on or before January 1, 2017 to the speakers of the Senate and the House of Representatives a

Findings of Law

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Another Supreme Court Decision

In 2014 the Supreme Court agreed to hear a second case involving the ACA – this time a challenge to the way the Obama Administration is applying the ACA. This case involved an interpretation of some ambiguous language in the ACA dealing with tax credits. The ACA requires virtually everyone in America to have health insurance. Persons who do not receive health coverage through their employers may purchase health insurance on government-run health exchanges.

The ACA gives each state the first opportunity to set up and run an exchange for its residents. Only 13 states have chosen to do so. In the remaining states, the federal government sets up and runs the exchange (as it does in Tennessee).

Many persons who purchase insurance through an exchange for a state government are eligible for a tax credit. The amount of the tax credit depends upon the person’s income level. However, the language of the ACA is ambiguous as to whether persons who purchase insurance through an exchange for a state government are eligible for the same tax credits. Many describe the ambiguity as a “drafting error” on the part of Congress.

In rules adopted by the Internal Revenue Service, the Obama Administration has chosen to provide the same tax credits to eligible persons, regardless of whether the state or federal government runs the exchange. The issue is important because health insurance is expensive and the tax credits make it more affordable for those who buy their insurance through an exchange.

The Administration’s rules on tax credits were challenged in cases filed in several states. When the Supreme Court decided the issue in June 2015 in a case styled King v. Burwell, the Court held that the Obama Administration had interpreted the ACA correctly. The Court said that “the words of a statute must be read in their context and with a view to their place in the overall statutory scheme.” The Court concluded: “Congress passed the Affordable Care Act to improve health insurance markets, not to destroy them. If at all possible, [the Court] must interpret the Act in a way that is consistent with the former, and avoids the latter.”

The decision in this case was written by Chief Justice John Roberts, as was the earlier decision. The vote of the Court was 6-3 in favor of this interpretation of the ACA. One of the dissenting judges, Justice Antonin Scalia, said cynically that the law should be called “SCOTUSCARE rather than Obamacare. SCOTUS is an acronym for Supreme Court of the United States.”
Congratulations to Caitlin Nelms (not pictured) of University of Memphis and Melissa Bukovi of Tennessee State University (pictured above with Melissa Grater)!

The Foundation of the Association of the Audiologists and Speech Language Pathologists awarded its annual scholarships at the 2015 Convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee. A $1000 scholarship was presented to a student in Audiology and to a student in Speech Language Pathology.

As Caitlin Nelms, winner of the audiology scholarship and a student at University of Memphis said on her essay:

“Throughout my lifetime, I have always had the desire to work with children. I often reflect back to the times when I would play school with my younger cousins all the while envisioning myself as a future teacher. Although my career choice has changed, my desire to assist and serve children and their families has only grown stronger. In the field of audiology, I enjoy the challenges presented when testing pediatric clients. The clinician must be creative and flexible in order to capture and maintain the child’s attention and interest. I also enjoy the challenge of adapting each session or appointment to best address the needs and concerns of each child and his or her family.”

The award in Speech Language Pathology was presented to Melissa Bukovi, a Speech Language Pathology student at Tennessee State University. In Melissa’s words:

“My mom was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. I immediately began researching and educating myself on symptoms, treatments, etc. I had no idea at that time what an impact a Speech Language Pathologist could have on a person with Multiple Sclerosis. As time has progressed so have her symptoms and now the disease occasionally affects her speech and swallowing mechanism. I can now say that my ambition to become a Speech Language Pathologist comes from an evolving process of finding my purpose.”

The Foundation has presented 19 scholarships over the years. If you would like to participate and help deserving students like Caitlin and Melissa, please visit the Foundation website at TAASLP.org.

Written By: Jane Ferrell
Congratulations to ETSU for winning the College Bowl Challenge!!!

"CALL FOR PAPERS" OPENS Sunday, May 1st

We are so looking forward to reviewing your many excellent submissions for consideration to present at TAASLP Convention 2016.

The 24th Annual Joint Convention of the Tennessee Association of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (TAASLP) and the Tennessee Academy of Audiology (TAA) will be returning to the beautifully equipped Embassy Suites in Murfreesboro, TN – Thursday, October 20th & Friday, October 21st. Please remember to book your hotel room before Tuesday, September 20th and enjoy a special discounted room rate ($149/night) by using the group code “SLP”. During your stay at Convention, delight in two-room suites with complimentary, cooked-to-order breakfast each morning and refreshments (cocktails included) at the Embassy Suites' Evening Reception each night. The Convention meeting facilities are top notch, with state-of-the-art audio/visual support, generous Breakout Session seating and a spacious Exhibit Hall. A free shuttle will take you anywhere within a 5-mile radius of the hotel; which conveniently neighbors The Avenue Murfreesboro - a charming collection of restaurants and shops certain to satisfy the need for a little post-convention nourishment and retail therapy.

The 24th Annual TAASLP & TAA Convention
The Embassy Suite Hotel – Murfreesboro, TN
October 20th & 21st, 2016
Hotel Room Reservation Group ID #: SLP
(615) 890-4464

Congratulations to MTSU for winning the Spirit Competition!!!

Congrats to Crystal Lumm, MS, Lynn Harmon, MS, and Paulette Gentry, MS on receiving Service Awards!!!!!