

# THE COMMUNICAT

SPRING 2022



## From the Department Head

Happy New Year and welcome to the spring term! The fun never stops at WCU CSD. In 2022, we'll settle into our new CAA accreditation cycle, see more students graduate with undergraduate and graduate degrees, and work to fill several program positions. Things continue to rock along even as Covid lingers. In fact, I'd say we've developed a pretty "can do" attitude as we work to assure student learning and success.

In this issue of the CommuniCat you'll read about the upcoming Cullowhee Conference on Communicative Disorders, CSD's new professional writing group, Project INTERACT developments, ASHA Washington highlights, and Trish Davis's departure into retirement. Of course, there are also brief features on program scholarships, student outcome measures, and an alumnus feature. So, get that coffee or hot chocolate, and relax for a little reading. We appreciate you!

Tracie Rice, CSD Department Head

### *What's in this newsletter:*

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## Cullowhee Conference

The 28th annual Cullowhee Conference on Communicative Disorders is slated for March 17th and 18th. This year the event is focused on autism and features a full day with Dr. Connie Kasari and a half-day with Dr. Jon Campbell. Dr. Kasari is an international expert in autism and founding member of the Center for Autism Research and Treatment (CART) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). At UCLA, she is both a Professor of Psychological Studies in Education and a Professor of Psychiatry at the David Geffen School of Medicine. Dr. Kasari also leads the Autism Intervention Research Network for Behavioral Health, a nine-institution research consortium.

Her JASPER ASD treatment program targets joint attention, symbolic play, and engagement regulation and has been demonstrated to facilitate early communication efforts and improve long-term outcomes in children on the spectrum.

Dr. Jon Campbell is a WCU alumnus, a Professor of Psychology at WCU, and Director of WCU's PSYD program. He is a nationally recognized expert in autism and has worked in the field of neurodevelopmental disabilities for over 20 years. Dr. Campbell completed pre- and postdoctoral training at Yale University's Child Study Center and was a faculty member at the University of Kentucky before returning to WCU and Cullowhee. He served on Kentucky's Advisory Council on Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Dr. Campbell's research focuses on attitudes of typical peers towards students with autism and the validity of early ASD screeners.

**The event will be face-to-face and virtual. Limited seating is available for f2f sessions. Register at:**

**<https://www.wcu.edu/engage/professional-enrichment/conferences-and-community-classes/conference-on-communicative-disorders.aspx>**

**A flier will be sent to those on our mailing list in February. If you have questions, contact Dr. Bill Ogletree at 828-227-3379 or [ogletree@wcu.edu](mailto:ogletree@wcu.edu).**



## Writing in CSD

Writing is a part of daily life. For professors and speech-language pathologists, writing is one of our most meaningful mediums to share thoughts, findings, and suggestions impacting our field. While we are all required to write, few of us have the time or opportunity to meet with others about writing needs, frustrations, and successes. In the fall of 2021, a new writing group formed that includes CSD academic and clinical faculty members. As of early January, our group has met twice to discuss writing needs and review sample writing offered by three participants. The group expects to meet twice more this year. WCU CSD is excited to offer this new resource for faculty and wishes all happy and successful writing in the future.

*If you are a graduate student or CSD program stakeholder interested in INTERACT, please learn more at <https://affiliate.wcu.edu/projectinteract/>*

## INTERACT Update

WCU Project INTERACT, our interprofessional personnel preparation grant in autism and severe ID, met two milestones this December and January. First, the project graduated its second cohort of 12 students. This included three CSD graduate students as well as students from Psychology and Special Education. Principal investigators Ogletree, Rose, Price, Campbell, and Cooper Duffy are unanimous

in their high hopes for INTERACT graduates. As one cohort leaves, another begins. January 2022 marked the admission of cohort three, consisting of 15 participants, five of them CSD graduate students. If you are a graduate student or CSD program stakeholder interested in INTERACT, please learn more at <https://affiliate.wcu.edu/projectinteract/>.



## ASHA Highlights

WCU CSD faculty, students, and graduates were involved in presentations during the recent ASHA Conference in Washington DC. The WCU contingent was present and active during the 3-day event and managed to return Covid free! A few sample sessions are listed below.

**Odom, L.** Evidence-based treatment approaches for major neurocognitive disorder.

**Price, J., Rose, A., Cooper-Duffy, K., Ogletree, B.T., & Campbell, J.M.** Development of an interprofessional university clinic for autism.

**Williams, K. (WCU CSD alumnus), & Ogletree, B.T.** A model for solution-oriented AAC service providers.

**Fasanello, N. (second-year graduate student) , & Wofford, C.** Reviewing a framework for concealable stigma in communication disorders: Addressing adverse outcomes and promoting inclusion.

**Wofford et al. (including Jessica Cano, first-year graduate student)** Tell or retell?: Task, language, & validity in Spanish-English narrative performance.



## All Good Things Come to an End: Trish Davis's Retirement

As the fall 2021 semester ended last month, so did the WCU CSD career of our own Trish Davis. For over a decade, Trish was a steady and creative force in CSD. She led innovative clinical supervisory efforts on campus and at Cullowhee Valley School and, by doing so, changed the lives of countless graduate students and children. Trish was nothing if not the consummate colleague. She was quiet and reflective but a driving force behind numerous program activities. Her voice will be missed in many areas but particularly as one who stood up for those on the margins.

At her retirement send-off, Trish shared that she was headed to the beach for a while and would eventually find her way back to these mountains. Wherever she lands, those around her will be better for her presence. Trish, we love you and wish you everything wonderful in the future!

*"Trish, we love  
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the future!"*

## CAA - Starting a New Accreditation Cycle

Although the CommuniCat has already reported on WCU CSD's successful reaccreditation in 2021, it is worth noting that accreditation does not end. Our department now embarks on a new 8-year cycle. Again, we appreciate all the assistance provided by students and program stakeholders who made CAA's site visit so successful. The CommuniCat and CSD faculty would also like to recognize the valiant efforts of Dr. Tracie Rice, who steered the accreditation ship flawlessly. Thank you Tracie!



## Faculty Updates

**Kim Carver** – Kim is enjoying her new position as office manager in CSD. She invites folks to drop by and get acquainted.

**Machelle Cathey** – Machelle is excited to begin working with the 3rd cohort of Project INTERACT and continue supervising students in the clinic. She loved having time to relax and enjoy the holidays with friends and family over the winter break.

**Thales De Nardo** – Dr. De Nardo enjoyed his first semester at WCU. Fall in the mountains lived up to the hype and teaching new classes was a stimulating challenge. He is looking forward to teaching and working at the clinic this semester.

**Leigh Odom** – Dr. Odom is firing up a new collaboration with the Department on Aging in Sylva. She will be facilitating a caregiver support and education program as well as offering free cognitive screenings to people in the community. She hopes to bring students into the adult day program at the DOA to facilitate a stimulation program for people with cognitive impairment.

**Bill Ogletree** – Dr. OOOOOOOOOO enjoyed seeing a 2022 Communication Disorders Quarterly article published with former student Sarah Yucha and WCU colleagues Drs. Kelly Kelley and Georgia Hambrecht – Finding 25 Hours: Active engagement training for parents of children with autism. The effort documented Sarah's thesis work promoting engagement between parents and their young children with autism. Dr. Ogletree also enjoyed his kids' visits home during the holidays.

**Johanna Price** – Dr. Price is enjoying implementing projects that stemmed from her participation in AFDI (ASHA Faculty Development Institute). One project is about creating a curriculum-wide framework for integrating evidence-based practice instruction throughout our program. Drs. Rice and Wofford are collaborators who make this project fun! Another project focuses on developing a sustainable avenue for interprofessional education and practice (IPE/P) opportunities for our students. Valued colleagues from CSD, special education, social work, and psychology are playing integral roles in this work. Stay tuned for updates as these projects progress. Dr. Price will also be presenting about IPE with Project INTERACT colleagues at the virtual NC Council of Exceptional Children Conference in February. In April, she will lead a panel discussion on assessment in CSD graduate programs at the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders Conference in Portland, Oregon.



**Kate Roellgen** – Kate enjoyed her time off recovering from back surgery and is happy to be back. She is looking forward to fully recovering.

**Amy Rose** – Dr. Rose (along with her coauthors from CHHS's Health Educator Academy) just published an article in the International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement titled "Cultivating Cross-Cultural Learning and Collaboration among Special Educators Engaged in International Service-Learning." She continues to be busy with ProjectINTERACT and PEERS and will be presenting on social-skills training at the upcoming DADD Conference in Clearwater, Florida. Amy is also looking forward to engaging in activities as a member of the 2021-2022 cohort for the Faculty Institute on Community Engagement.

**Tracie Rice** – Dr. Rice enjoyed a restful break with her family. She is excited for spring classes and clinic and is already looking forward to warm weather coming soon!

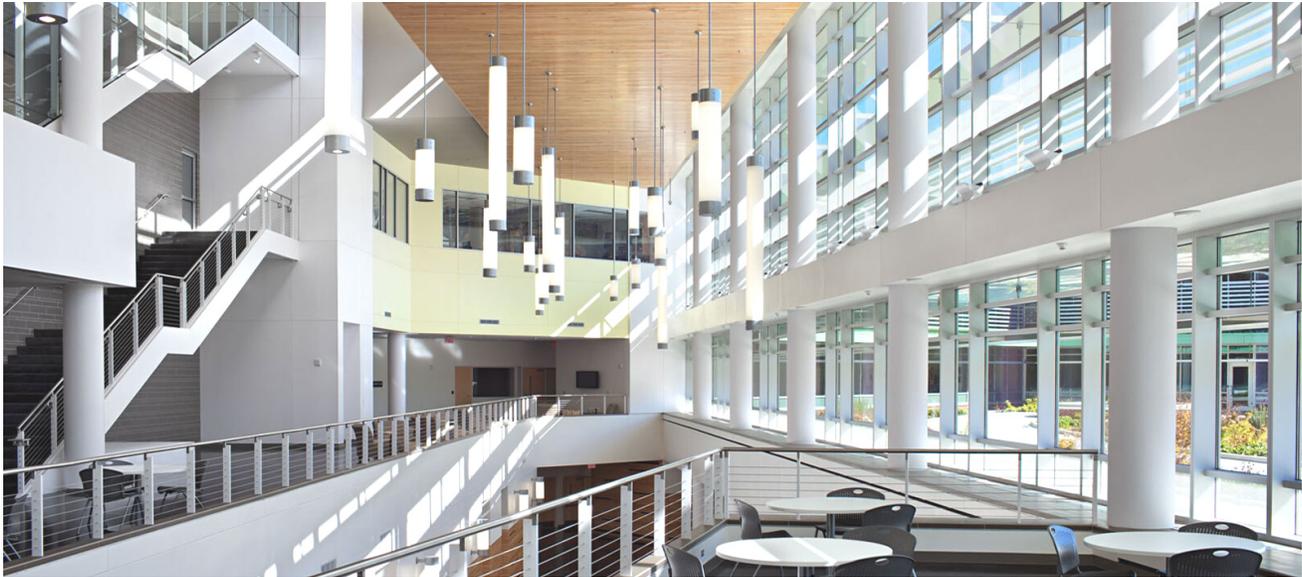
**Erin Shepherd** – Erin is enjoying another term supervising and she, her husband, and Chloe are eagerly awaiting baby number two! Congrats to the Shepherd family.



**Laura Trivette** – Laura is excited for the new term and very pleased to have several new adult placements for students.

**Claire Wofford** – Dr. Wofford worked diligently on writing in the fall semester and submitted a manuscript with Dr. Ogletree and Dr. De Nardo. She is looking forward to the spring semester and working with WCU students in the clinic, writing manuscripts, collecting data for the Bilingual Siblings research project, and learning with the DEI in CSD committee. Outside of work, she is spending lots of time swimming, sewing, and planning her garden for this summer.

**Sarah Young** – Sarah and her partner, Ethan, bought a house in Sylva and are happy to be putting down roots in WNC, as they love hiking and being outdoors. Professionally, Sarah is enjoying her clinical teaching at Mountain Discovery Charter School and is excited to be a first-time lecturer for the Measurement Practices in Communication Disorders course this semester.



## Giving Back

Please remember the wonderful opportunities to support CSD students through contributions to program scholarships!! From this point forward, the CommuniCat will feature one existing scholarship per issue. This issue highlights the Ruby Drew Scholarship.

The Ruby Drew Scholarship has now been awarded for more than 5 years. Dr. Drew was a professor in CSD for over a decade beginning in the late 1990s. She served in numerous leadership roles including Program Coordinator and was dedicated to quality teaching, covering “all things adult” for her time at Western.

Students who learned with Dr. Drew probably remember her best for that midwestern accent and her no-nonsense approach to learning. Of course, there were also those scary “Drew tests.” Dr. Drew was central to regional efforts to develop Aphasia groups for patients and their families and played a critical role in securing Dr. Nancy Helm Estabrooks as a WCU endowed professor. Give to the Ruby Drew or other scholarships (Pediatric Developmental Therapy, Excellence, Cheshire Center, and David and Kay Shapiro) by contacting WCU’s Ben Pendry at [bjpendry@email.wcu.edu](mailto:bjpendry@email.wcu.edu)

### *Program Outcome Data*

*All fall 2021  
WCU master’s  
students in  
Speech-  
Language  
Pathology passed  
their PRAXIS  
exam and those  
seeking  
employment were  
successful.  
Special congrats  
to our fall 2021  
graduates!!!*

# alumni

## Where Are They Now?

Welcome to a new CommuniCat feature focusing on program alumni. In this issue, we highlight Nicole McRight, an SLP in the Jackson County Schools. Here are a few thoughts from Nicole.

Before graduating from WCU, I intended to pack up and find adventure elsewhere; however, my wife and I decided Cullowhee was now our home. My studies at WCU, including the grant program in autism and severe disabilities, landed me a job with the Jackson County Public Schools where I've served preschool to high school students and been active on the County's autism support team. For over two years now, I have also been a certified Resilience Educator for Jackson County through Resources for Resilience. In this role I teach a two-day course on chronic stress, trauma, and resilience to educators.

This work has been a labor of love and something about which I've grown quite passionate. Over the years, my relationship with WCU has continued through off-campus supervision, advisory-board participation, and my work as a WCU SHC adjunct clinical supervisor. My connection continues to reinforce the importance of relationships as I partner with WCU's Speech and Hearing Clinic and work closely with Dr. Rice, Laura Trivette, and Dr. Wofford when coordinating services for my youngest students.



# Camp LEAD

## *Language/Literacy Engagement And Development*

For children 3rd grade and older with speech, language, and/or reading disabilities (including dyslexia)

Mondays through Fridays

June 6 – July 1

Drop off: 8:45 – 9:00 am

Pick up: 12:00 pm



Speech and Hearing Clinic

Health and Human Sciences Building (Cullowhee)

Western Carolina University

**For more information or to register, contact:**

Johanna Price, PhD, CCC-SLP

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

jprice@wcu.edu 828-227-3795

### Registration:

Please register your child as soon as possible; it helps us to best prepare and plan! Registration will close when all spots are filled.

