

Greetings from the Editors

It's hard to believe that we've finally reached that point in the school year when the end is in sight. With less than two months left we think it's safe to say that we're all counting down the days until June 28th and reflecting on just how fast another year has come and gone.

It's been another busy year with many challenges and accomplishments that we hope you'll enjoy reading about in this issue. We'd like to send out a huge thank you to members of the SIC's executive and subcommittee for your tireless efforts, as well as to those of you cheering us on

from the sidelines. The most important factor impacting our success is our ability to come together and hash things out!

Here's hoping the remainder of your school year will leave you feeling productive (may your reports be written with a supernatural ease!) and satisfied with a job done to the best of your ability. Whatever your plans for the summer, we hope you'll savour and treasure every well-deserved moment.

~ Michele Critchley (*Communications Officer*) & Kirsten Haynes (*Vice-President*)



SLP-SIC executive at the NLTA office during our annual "face-to-face" meeting. Pictured top left to bottom right: Jade Kearley, Susan Clarke, Michele Critchley, Natasha Kapoor, Kirsten Haynes, Sandy Crowley. Regrets: Natalie Finlay who is replacing Angela Dunphy while she is on maternity leave.

Wondering what the benefits are of being a member of the Special Interest Council? *Here are just a few!*

- We are part of a professional learning community that supports the growth of SLPs in education.
- It's a place to address issues about our profession, such as caseload caps, recruitment and retention, PL opportunities, etc.
- Representation of members at the NLTA Biennial General Meeting where we present resolutions that are important to our profession.
- It provides access to the SLP SIC Facebook page where resources and news articles can be found and shared.
- Professional learning opportunities that pertain to SLPs in education.
- Having the opportunity each year to apply for the PL grant of \$500.
- Administrative Support from the NLTA (*i.e. setting up teleconferences, formatting our newsletter, sending out the newsletter to the membership, providing posters to help promote May is Speech and Hearing Month*).

Every time an SLP walks
down the hall...



"Do I have you today?"



Professional Development/ Materials Grant

We are happy to announce that we will again be offering a grant to SLP Special Interest Council members. Grant money may be used for professional development or for the purchase of therapy materials. Please read on to learn how to **apply by June 21, 2019**.

The grant to be awarded is a maximum of \$500. Applications will be reviewed by the SLP-SIC executive and eligible applicants will be randomly selected. Please consider the following guidelines:

- Travel, accommodations and registration will be covered up to \$500; the fund does not cover the cost of meals.
- Funds will be awarded when proof of attendance and necessary receipts are received.
- Professional development must be in the area of speech, language and literacy, and/or be relevant to school-based speech-language pathologists.
- Applicants must agree to provide a short, written summary of what they learned during their professional development. This summary will be shared with our members through our newsletter and social media.
- Funds must be used within one calendar year of the awarded date.

Hurry and get your applications in before it's too late – **by June 21!** This is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

Go to www.nlta.nl.ca/slp-pdgrant

Remember When...

Here's a section devoted to the SLP students and volunteers that enrich our careers with their thought-provoking questions, their fresh ideas and most of all, their enthusiasm for our profession. We hope their responses to the questions below will inspire you and remind you why you became an SLP in the first place; x number of years ago (we'll let you fill in the blank!)

Sydney Manuel – volunteering with Kirsten Haynes at Bishop Abraham; MUN student recently accepted into the University of Alberta for Fall 2019

Q: What made you decide you wanted to become an SLP?

A: Like many students, I first struggled when it came to choosing a master's program. After countless nights of research during the completion of my undergraduate degree, I happened upon Speech-Language Pathology (S-LP). The more I read, the more excited I became. Once I had made this realization, I did everything I could to further my knowledge in this field. I've come to learn that making a difference in the life of another individual is an incredibly satisfying feeling. As an SLP, I would look forward to experiencing this fulfillment every day.

Q: What aspects of the profession do you find most exciting, what do you most look forward to?

A: The assortment of disorders, impairments, diagnoses, and treatments, prove that one individual case may never mirror that of the next. This diversity allows for never-ending novel experiences, which I believe to be incredibly fascinating. Not only does this provide an abundance of experience in different focus areas but allows S-LPs to continue learning new information throughout the entirety of their career. Additionally, it is comforting to know that you will not necessarily be performing repetitive routine tasks daily.

Q: What do you think you'll find most challenging, working as an SLP?

A: As an SLP, working in a field with a diverse patient population may be challenging. This would require continuous learning and adapting skills to each patient's needs. However, this does allow a changing environment, which is something that excites me. Furthermore, this will provide me with experience in multiple settings, and increase my overall knowledge regarding speech therapy.

Q: Can you describe one of the highlights of your volunteer experience?

A: I look forward to volunteering every week. During these sessions, I get to observe many therapy sessions, and interact with the children, providing me with insight into the role of an SLP. I

also have been given the experience to ask many questions, from very broad to incredibly specific. Overall, through this volunteer experience, I feel especially prepared to enter my graduate program.

Colin Jones – doing his first-year practicum with Michele Critchley; McGill University Graduate Student

Q: Where are you from?

A: I am from Vancouver B.C.

Q: Why did you choose McGill University?

A: I chose McGill because I wanted to speak some French, and because I liked the program's attitude towards combining research and clinical training.

Q: What made you decide you wanted to become an SLP?

A: I wanted to be an SLP because it sort of combines all my interests. My bachelor's was in voice performance and speech science: communication as both an expressive art and an academic pursuit. Plus, I'd quite like to be able to help people.

Q: What age groups and/or populations are you most interested in working with?

A: So far, I like all age groups. Population-wise, I'm especially interested in voice, resonance, and phonology.

Q: What do you think you will find most challenging working as an SLP?

A: For me, the most challenging thing about being an SLP is honestly just the organizational side of things! I'm sort of a chaotic person, and perfecting all the details of paperwork and schedules and such is really hard work for me. Aside from that, when I meet a client or look at their reports, I find it hard to choose from the various potential interpretations and approaches for them.

Q: What made you decide you wanted to do your practicum in St. John's NL?

A: My motivation for choosing this practicum was largely curiosity. I still feel that, to a certain extent, I don't know what I don't know. I didn't have my heart set on a particular population or province, so I thought I'd go someplace I'd never been and find out what I've been missing. So far, the weather has failed to turn me off of this lovely city!

Growing Pains

When we reflect on our lives, many of us can attest to the fact that oftentimes our greatest periods of personal growth have resulted from challenges we've faced. When the Speech-Language Pathologist's Special Interest Council was originally formed, its main goal was to advocate for improved services for the students we work with. It couldn't have been anticipated that, only three years later, we'd be pulling together to justify and maintain our unique role within the school system.

As a result of this unexpected turn of events, our SIC has shown significant growth within the last year. The following are some highlights:

- The formation of our very first subcommittee which addressed the membership's concerns regarding Recommendations 10 & 11 of the Premier's Task Force. A huge shout-out is in order for the following individuals, who stepped up to the plate by compiling research and presenting thoroughly-backed arguments to Mr. Bob Gardner and Mr. Eldred Barnes of the Department of Education: Sandy Crowley, Natalie Finlay, Lori Penny, Janice McKay, Penny Gale-Pittman and Allison Stark. **Thank you, thank you, thank you**, for your commitment and willingness to give of your own time to come together for such an important cause.
- Formation of a liaison with NLASLPA. Natasha Kapoor, current president of the association and member of the SLP SIC, has graciously agreed to join our executive as an official liaison. This has been a great opportunity for the SIC to garner the support of our provincial association and also to open the lines of communication with government officials. NLASLPA had two official meetings with the Deputy, Associate Deputy and Assistant Deputy Ministers, again to present issues pertinent to school-based SLPs. **Another big thank you** goes out to Natasha and the NLASLPA executive for willingly accepting this added responsibility.

Letter # 8 – What Does it Mean?

The new 2016-2020 NLTA Collective Agreement contains a letter on page 60 entitled "Movement of Speech Language Pathologists and Educational Psychologists", which reads as follows:

The parties agree that permanent employees employed in a permanent position allocated for the 2019/2020 school year in the classification of Speech Language Pathologists or Educational Psychologists will continue to be covered by this Collective Agreement, as long as they remain in the permanent position.

Clarification has been offered by Ms. Stefanie Tuff, NLTA Assistant Executive Director, regarding the impact of this letter, and the take-home message is that "all SLPs who hold a permanent SLP position up to and including the 2019/2020 school year will remain covered by the NLTA Collective Agreement and will not be impacted by any changes to service delivery in these areas that may happen after the 2019/2020 school year as long as they remain in that permanent position. Current, permanent SLPs as of 2019/2020 will remain in the school system with the same job description as present for as long as they remain in that permanent position."

While no one knows what changes may be in store for school-based SLPs in the coming months and years, the SLP SIC feels confident about the fact that the NLTA continues to work closely with us and advocates on behalf of school-based Speech Language Pathologists across the province to maintain and improve the current structure within education.

Summary of Updates from Resolutions Passed at the Last BGM

- Regarding the development of an allocation formula for SLPs: NLTA staff are working with the SIC, the Department of Education and District officials on the matter of improved caseload numbers. The opening package for the most recent round of negotiations included a proposal on allocations and caseload limits for SLPs.
- Regarding the issue of access to relevant professional development opportunities for SLPs: the NLESD and SLP SIC representatives met to discuss strategies to address the needs of SLPs province-wide. The NLESD has offered additional PL through webinars and provided funding to support SLP PL initiatives. Correspondence was sent to the NLESD Associate Director enquiring about future/ongoing plans in this area and requesting continued cooperation and funding.



BGM 2019

Our SIC's annual face-to-face meeting for executive members took place before Easter break on April 17-18 at the NLTA headquarters in St. John's. It is always a nice opportunity to connect with our colleagues in education from various parts of the province.

Among many other topics, possible resolutions to put forth at the NLTA's Biennial General Meeting were discussed and decided upon. The following two were passed at BGM and will serve to help shape the NLTA's areas of focus when advocating for the interests of SLPs over the next two years:

1. That the NLTA continue to lobby the EEC and school boards to address the issue of recruitment and retention of school-based speech-language pathologists in this province.
2. That the NLTA lobby the EEC and school boards to address the issue of inadequate and inconsistent workspace for assessors in the school environment.
3. That NLTA lobby government for caps on SLP caseloads.
(This specific resolution was submitted by the NLTA Special Services Special Interest Council. We would like to send a sincere thank you to them for highlighting this very important issue.)

This year's NLTA Biennial General Meeting took place on April 23-26 and was attended by Jade Kearley who bravely represented our SLP Special Interest Council, and Sandy Crowley (officially representing the Labrador West Branch).



From the Little Darlings

Because it's always good to remember how cute they are, the SIC welcomes stories such as these for publication in future issues. We'd love to hear about some of your happiest or silliest moments with your kids.

In September of 2013 when I started my very first job, I had a little boy in Port aux Basques who wasn't overly pleased that his SLP was off on maternity leave. I happened to be her replacement and apparently did some things a little differently, including playing games such as "Go Fish" (with a nasty requirement that he not only pronounce the picture-cards correctly, but the "go" as well).

He dug in his heels and made his feelings about me clear for quite some time at the beginning, but by Halloween I realized that not only had I won him over, but he had learned *something*. I came in that day and when he spotted me with my witch costume on he said, "Miss, you look dorgeous. Dorgeous is a "G" word, too!"

Not a year goes by that I don't wonder how he's doing.

On the long walk to the cramped but strangely cozy 'therapy' room just off the library, my bright and exuberant grade 1 student asked with a big grin, "Miss, do you notice anything different about me today?"

I began my careful analysis of the little boy's appearance and asked, "Did you get a new haircut?"

"Nope!"

"Oh! Did you get new shoes?"

Apparently I was wrong again. The answer had to be less obvious, I thought.

"Diiiiidddd the tooth fairy come to visit you?"

"Nope! Well, yeah, she did, but that was a while ago."

"Can I see?" I asked. He proceeded to show me a teeny-tiny 'grown-up' tooth which, sure enough, was just emerging from his lower gums, jagged at the top edge and all.

"Well, if it's not your new tooth, then I don't know what it is! I give up!"

There was a long, suspenseful pause before he finally revealed the big news. "I'm seven now!"

Happy birthday, buddy! And you're right — somehow I had forgotten how different a person looks once they turn seven.

Final Reminders:

1. Join our Facebook group if interested!
2. SLP student members are welcome to join too!
3. If you are no longer a member of the NLTA, please let us know.
4. Applications for the PL grant are due by June 21, 2019.