

**Letter from the President**  
by Janet Wagner

2020 Issue 3 (Fall)



As summer begins to wrap up and fall is quickly approaching, our families' normal routine would consist of finishing up a summer vacation, back-to-school clothes shopping at the mall, large family gatherings, and, of course, several backyard bar-b-ques with friends.

My work responsibilities would include scheduling kick-off dinners, attending beginning of the year trainings in person, and planning visits to meet all my employees and their students in their buildings. However, due to COVID-19, a new reality started shaping up in March that continues to evolve and alter how we face the back-to-school responsibilities for millions of students and staff. This new norm brings with it a host of emotions and challenges that we all are addressing—some on our own and others as a collective.

OSHA has met this challenge head-on and will continue to persevere through, navigate, and address the new obstacles and issues as they occur. We have created work groups and committees that research the issues, brainstorm ideas, and create solutions that support our community. These areas include, but are not limited to: COVID-19, racial equality & social injustice, safety in our work settings, telepracticing/telesupervision, workload, legislative advocacy, and public outreach. I know many of us are feeling like our bandwidth is stretched to maximum compacity, but the board members would like to extend to you an invitation to volunteer in one or more of these areas. If that is not an option for you at this time, you can still support the efforts of OSHA by joining the primary organization whose main objective is to support all SLPs, audiologists, and SLPAs in our state and advocate for our needs at the national level. The OSHA website and social media platforms are

regularly updated with the latest information on these areas of concerns and other valuable information you may need for navigating through this time of change, including details about our upcoming conference.

Due to the continued health and safety concerns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the conference committee and board made the decision to host this year's two-day conference virtually. OSHA continues to be dedicated to providing the highest quality of educational opportunities and are excited to offer up to 15.5 CEUs in a safe, virtual format on October 9-10, 2020. The Fall Conference, titled "OSHA Strong," will blend the very best of local and national presenters. Topics will include updates on traditional areas, including AAC, autism, dysphagia, ELL, patient-centered care in aphasia and dementia, language sampling, service delivery models, supervision, voice, and workload model. Newer areas of topic for our profession include awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity, COVID-19 challenges and patient care, working with the LGBTQ community, OMD, telepractice, and working with the at-risk minors for juvenile delinquency.



In addition to the sessions, please join us for the business and awards luncheon on Friday, where we will highlight some of the best and brightest graduate students and fellow colleagues. We will wrap up Friday sessions with our invited Plenary speaker, Dr. Susan Shaw, a professor of Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies at Oregon State University. Dr. Shaw will present ways to address racism, misogyny, poverty, trans- and homophobia, and other forms of discrimination in workplaces, families, and communities.

Looking forward to "seeing" everyone in October. Stay safe.

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# Making Voices Heard

The Oregon Speech-Language and Hearing Association is committed to making our voices heard by loudly speaking out against racial injustice. The senseless deaths of too many people of color, throughout history and still today, attest to the deeply ingrained racial prejudice and injustice that still exist in our communities. We owe it to those individuals we serve, our colleagues, students entering the fields of speech-language pathology and audiology, and our communities to be very clear in condemning all acts of violence against people of color. These actions represent a blatant disregard for the basic human rights of dignity, fairness, equality, and respect.

Although we cannot change the past, we have the power within us to change the future by looking at our own racial biases and those within our workplace culture, policies, and practices, then do what we do best: start a discussion that includes active listening. These conversations are not easy, but they are more important than ever. Let us all speak up and become part of the solution.

## *Join an OSHA Subcommittee*

### **OSHA's Committee on Bylaws and Policies**

OSHA is currently looking for volunteers to serve on an ad hoc committee to help review and update our bylaws and policies.

The goal will be to have both the bylaws and policies reviewed and revised in time to present to the members at the October 2021 OSHA conference business luncheon.

If you are interested in learning more and/or volunteering, please email Janet Wagner at [jwagnerslp@gmail.com](mailto:jwagnerslp@gmail.com).

### **OSHA's Committee on Strategic Planning**

OSHA is currently looking for volunteers to serve on an ad hoc committee to help review and update the OSHA strategic plan.

The goal will be to have the strategic plan reviewed and revised in time to present to the members at the October 2021 OSHA conference business luncheon.

If you are interested in learning more and/or volunteering, please email Kerry Mandulak at [mandulak@pacificu.edu](mailto:mandulak@pacificu.edu).

### **OSHA's Committee on Racial Equity & Social Justice**

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd in May, OSHA shared our [initial statement](#) around racism and social justice. As an organization, we are committed to advocating for the safety and dignity of our clients, their families, and colleagues of color. In an effort to consider our own whiteness, response to racism, and understanding of systemic white supremacy as an organization, the OSHA board has created a new Racial Equity and Social Justice committee. The two main charges of the committee right now will be to identify our own racial equity needs organizationally (e.g., representation, whiteness in systems, etc.) and to encourage community feedback. OSHA board members representing on the committee include Melissa Fryer (Pacific University), Jeff Gierer (Portland Public Schools), Megann McGill (Portland State University), Ana Lia Oliva (Northwest Regional Educational Service District), and Jayme Sloan (University of Oregon). We understand the urgency and importance of racial equity work and are grateful for our community's input as we move forward.

***The board will seek to engage others in this committee and will reach out to call for interest and engagement in this work at a later date.***

## OSHA Annual Fall Conference 2020—Going Virtual!

by Rik Lemoncello, VP for Science and Education

*The OSHA Annual Fall Conference will take place ONLINE on October 9-10.*

The planning for the annual fall OSHA conference is in full swing. With the move to an all online, virtual conference this year, we are navigating many new details to get organized and be prepared. Many thanks to the hard work of the entire conference planning committee, OSHA President Janet Wagner, and our staff at Court Street Consulting to help us prepare. We have confirmed all speakers for full days of concurrent sessions with national speakers on Friday and local speakers on Saturday. It's a great lineup of current topics sure to keep you engaged, learning, and networking!

I have a few conference highlights for you:

- **Amplifying Voices from Underrepresented Populations.** In an effort to promote anti-racist work and amplify the voices and work of under-represented speakers, topics, and clinical work, we have invited an amazing lineup of speakers for our Friday sessions. There will be five concurrent morning sessions and five different concurrent afternoon sessions to choose from. Check out [oregonspeechandhearing.org/fall-conference](https://oregonspeechandhearing.org/fall-conference) for the brochure.
- **Dr. Susan Shaw** from Oregon State University will deliver the Friday evening Kathy De Domingo **plenary session** on advocacy. This named session highlights important advocacy work and aims to engage our audience in meaningful, reflective work. Dr. Shaw's expertise in social justice will provide a lens through which to view our work and promote equity (for ourselves, our clients, and our communities).
- On Saturday, we have a great lineup of local speakers who will present peer-reviewed sessions on a wide variety of topics. There will be 24 different presentations throughout the day on Saturday as well as 25 different poster/technical sessions during lunch time on Saturday. Sessions covering contemporary issues such as telepractice, healthcare in the midst of COVID-19, social justice, and ethics are a few of the highlights.
- There will be a session on **supervision** if you need to meet this requirement (all clinicians who supervise students or Clinical Fellows are required to have CE transcript evidence of a course in supervision) or if you are interested in an update. Dr. Whitney Perkins from Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi, will be sharing her expertise for this three-hour session on Friday afternoon.
- There will be a session on **ethics** if you need to meet this new requirement (starting in 2020, all CCC holders are required to complete one hour of ethics CE training every three years for recertification). Teresa Roberts from Portland State University will share her expertise on advocacy through an ethics lens on Saturday afternoon for this one-hour session.
- Be sure to attend the business & awards meeting during the Friday lunch time to celebrate the many accomplishments of OSHA this year and to honor our colleagues receiving awards!

The full conference is available for 15.50 hours of CE credit. The full conference program is available online, and registration is open. Remember to renew your OSHA membership (or join OSHA!) to take advantage of the membership discount on conference registration! Early registration discounts are available until September 21.

I look forward to "seeing" you all (and your colleagues from across the world!!!) for our first ever fully online OSHA Fall Conference!

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## OSHA Award Nominations OPEN!

It's time to nominate a colleague for an OSHA Award! Each year we honor several outstanding members at our conference. If you know or work with a deserving individual, please nominate them for an award. We have moved to a much simpler nomination process this year.

To nominate a colleague, use this Google form: <https://forms.gle/XJybfNzsFF7q4q4n8>. You'll be asked to provide just a few simple details:

- your contact information
- nominee's contact information
- a brief summary of why you think this person should be honored
- names of 1-3 people who agree with this nomination
- optional extras (resume, links)

*That's it!*

**Deadline:** September 18, 2020

**Eligibility:** Any OSHA member, practicing at least 5 years

Last year's recipients included: Lyndsay Duffus, Rik Lemoncello, Karen Aguilera, and students Monica Vinson, Lauren Zinnershine, and Karen Nystrom.

Find more information on our website, <https://www.oregonspeechandhearing.org/HonorandAwards>, and contact Jill Dolata, Chair of Honors and Awards, via [oshaoregon@gmail.com](mailto:oshaoregon@gmail.com) with questions.

*Continued on page 5...*

## **Award Categories and Descriptions**

### **Honors of the Association**

Designated as a "lifetime achievement" award. The intent of this award is to recognize an individual for outstanding history of clinical practice in the field of speech-language pathology, audiology, or education of the deaf/HOH.

*This award may also be used to recognize outstanding advocacy or program sponsorship by an agency or organization.*

### **Outstanding Clinician Award: Schools/ EI/ECSE**

Recognizes a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, audiologist, or educator of the deaf/HOH who consistently demonstrates outstanding clinical, advocacy, or leadership skills in the educational system.

*This award may recognize general clinical work or a specific, recent clinical achievement.*

### **Outstanding Clinician Award: Clinics, Hospitals, Private Practice**

Recognizes a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, audiologist, or educator of the deaf/HOH in a clinic, hospital, or private practice who consistently demonstrates outstanding clinical, advocacy, and/or leadership skills.

*This award may recognize general clinical work or a specific, recent clinical achievement.*

### **Award of Clinicianship**

Recognizes a speech-language pathologist, speech-language pathology assistant, audiologist, or educator of the deaf/HOH whose dedication to the field is reflected in strong clinical and/or leadership skills paired with compassion, empathy, humor, and acts of support to colleagues and clients. Beyond clinical skills, this person's spirit touches and inspires those around them.

*This award may also be used to recognize an individual who has made a contribution to the profession in an unusual way.*

### **Award for Outstanding Research or Teaching**

Recognizes a colleague whose published research or teaching (professional preparation or continuing education) has contributed to advancing clinical knowledge and/or practice in the fields of speech-language pathology, audiology, or education of the deaf/HOH.

### **OSHA Professional Advocacy Award**

Honors a person who has contributed to the advancement of the visibility, viability, or vitality of our professions. Potential nominees include legislators, philanthropists, SLPs, SLPAs, Audiologists, or any public figure that has shown outstanding advocacy for our professions.

## OSHA Education Foundation Silent Auction 2020—ONLINE!



Do you or does someone you know have craft skills, a wine collection, a vacation rental, or Etsy shop? We are currently seeking items for our 2020 OSHA Online Conference Silent Auction! Your gift will go to support the *OSHA Education Foundation*, OSHA's charitable organization that provides scholarships to outstanding Oregon graduate students. Auction items will be presented on an online fundraising website with a direct link from the conference website. OSHA would love the opportunity to showcase the talents and generosity of our members, so please consider donating today!

Please contact Melissa Fryer ([fryer@pacificu.edu](mailto:fryer@pacificu.edu)) if you are interested or have any questions.

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### New President-Elect

by Melissa Link-Cole

I would like to extend a warm welcome to Kelli Eickelberg, OSHA's President-Elect, and take a moment to thank her for stepping into the position this past June. It was not an easy decision for me to step down from being president-elect, but it was necessary in order for me to make my recovery from a concussion my top priority. I will continue in my role with OSHA as the School-Based SLP Representative with a current focus on workload and developing a strong working relationship between OSHA and the Oregon Education Association (OEA) to support school-based SLPs.



# Appeal to the State

*OSHA recently sent a letter to a variety of state and district leaders to advocate for a safe return to EI/ECSE and school-based services for both audiologists and speech-language pathologists. A copy of this letter is provided here to make you aware of OSHA's position on how to successfully execute a safe return.*

August 3, 2020

Dear Director of Oregon Department of Education, District Superintendents, District Directors of Special Education K-21, District Directors of Early Intervention (EI)/Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Oregon Education Association Executive Board

## **Re: Resuming Audiology & Speech Language Services in EI/ ECSE and Public Schools (K-21) during COVID-19**

The Oregon Speech-Language and Hearing Association (OSHA) is the professional association representing more than 150 audiologists & 2,000 Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) in Oregon who are certified through the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). In alliance with ASHA, we call on school districts to make the safety of audiologists, speech-language pathologists, other school staff and faculty, students, and families their top priority as they develop plans for the coming school year.

OSHA is writing to ensure that the considerations ASHA recommends are followed for audiologists and speech-language pathologists (SLPs) who work in Early Intervention/ Early Childhood Special Education and Public Schools (K-21). Audiologists and SLPs work with a variety of service models as well as in various settings; EI/ ECSE provide home and site-based (i.e., preschool, Head Start, childcare) services, and K-21 school-age services are provided across multiple schools, classrooms, and transition/vocational programs. These considerations are imperative for ensuring the safety of students and their families, audiologists and SLPs as well as other staff members.

On July 18, 2020, The American Speech Language and Hearing Association (ASHA) published an advocacy position statement regarding the opening of schools which recommends the following considerations be made for audiologists and SLPs who work in schools:

- **Procedures for monitoring the health of staff and students** as well as that of others who enter the building will be important for virus detection. Staff and families need to know about health monitoring efforts and protocol.
- **Students' ability to see the clinician's mouth and facial expressions is important** when providing audiology and speech-language pathology services. Given the proximity of clinicians and students when services are provided, PPE will be needed to reduce virus transmission. It is recommended that administrators provide school-based professionals with appropriate PPE such as desktop plexiglass screens, gloves, clear face masks, and eye protection. In addition, OSHA recommends local districts provide PPE that is evidence-based and consistent with those that are used by medically based audiologists and SLPs.
- The CDC recommends **working with the same group of students** on a regular basis to reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19. Because audiologists and SLPs work with different

students throughout the week and may travel to multiple schools to provide services, they may be at greater risk. **The CDC recommends the provision of telework as an option.**

- **Use of assistants and/or interpreters** may be required, at times. To the maximum extent feasible, you should use the same support personnel to minimize risk. Brief all personnel in the room on safety protocols prior to sessions. The CDC does permit allowances for students who require personal assistants for day-to-day activities; however, these assistants must follow CDC-recommended standard safety protocols with other individuals.
- **It is not unusual for students to share “high-touch materials” and devices** in special education programs, especially when students are in groups and the materials/devices are key to facilitating achievement of therapy targets. For this reason, disinfecting therapy tools and devices between uses is very important but does require time that will impact individualized education program (IEP) therapy minutes for each subsequent student or group of students because therapy sessions are often back-to-back with limited time for transitions.
- **Discuss student service delivery models.** You may find that you can more safely deliver services using a different model. Considerations may include:
  - ⇒ students’ ability to maintain proper physical distance and proper use of safety masks;
  - ⇒ students’ identified communication impairment and potential benefits to in-person services versus telepractice; and
  - ⇒ IEP goals and subsequent indicators for success in group versus individual services.
- **Allowances for personal and public safety may require modification to existing IEP recommendations.** The IEP team should consider how to balance safety and achievement of IEP goals in a least restrictive environment (LRE). They may need to recommend changes to the setting and service delivery methods to ensure student and staff safety.
- **Discuss students’ disorders or diagnoses.** Student-specific characteristics or needs may require different types of services—and even some changes to the IEPs.
- **Establish a process for immediate hand washing or the use of hand sanitizers** prior to entering the speech room. Although you can use hand sanitizer, hand washing is the preferred method, if it is physically available.
- **Provide services in a well-ventilated area** to reduce the likelihood of spread, as some studies are indicating that poor ventilation may contribute to the spread of coronavirus.

OSHA fully supports ASHA’s recommendations for resuming services during COVID-19 as well as health and safety guidelines from the CDC and Oregon Health Authority.

RESOURCES: <https://www.asha.org/practice/resuming-services-in-schools-during-covid-19>

Sincerely,

Janet Wagner, OSHA President  
Quinn Ellingsen, OSHA EI/ECSE Representative  
Melissa Link-Cole, OSHA School-Based Representative

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## Workload Survey for EI/ECSE and School-Based SLPs

The Oregon Speech-Language & Hearing Association is in the beginning stages of advocating for workload legislation at the state level for school-based Speech-Language Pathologists. If you work as a Speech-Language Pathologist within the school system (birth-21) we are requesting you complete this survey by 9/20/2020. Your responses will be anonymous. The survey can be accessed online at: [surveymonkey.com/r/GSDQ5M8](https://surveymonkey.com/r/GSDQ5M8).

Participants have the option to enter a drawing upon the completion of this survey (most questions require you to choose at least one option) by entering their contact information. One entry per person. Winners will be drawn at random. Generous prizes have been donated by Peachie Speeche, Social Thinking, Northern Speech Services, LessonPix.com, The Informed SLP, and Super Power Speech.

The purpose of this survey is to assist OSHA in gathering information regarding the following:

- ⇒ General workload for EI/ECSE school-based SLPs across the state;
- ⇒ How individual districts handle caseload/workload;
- ⇒ How distance learning impacts workloads, and
- ⇒ Advocate for workload needs at the state level.

It will also help determine what areas of workload need special considerations as well as know how best to support & advocate for EI/ECSE school-based SLPs in Oregon.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA):

“...no longer recommends a specific caseload number for the following reasons:

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...continued from page 9.

- ⇒ There is no research to support a specific caseload size.
- ⇒ The needs of students receiving speech-language services vary greatly, and a specific caseload number does not take into account this variation. For example, a caseload of 40 students with very mild communication disorders could be manageable, whereas a caseload of 40 students with severe disabilities is not likely to support the provision of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).”

(Quoted from [https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/caseload-and-workload/.](https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/professional-issues/caseload-and-workload/))

The Oregon Education Association (OEA) is assisting OSHA in sharing this survey with SLPs in Oregon.

**Workload Committee:**

*Melissa Link-Cole, Kristina Schmalzer, Bozena Barton, Sara Starlin,  
Elizabeth Ebensteiner, and Wendy Gunter*

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**Oregon Speech-Language & Hearing Association**

1284 Court Street NE • Salem, OR 97301

Phone: 503-585-0764 • Fax: 503-364-9919

[OSHAOregon@gmail.com](mailto:OSHAOregon@gmail.com)

[oregonspeechandhearing.org](http://oregonspeechandhearing.org)

Office hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday, excluding holidays

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