President’s Message
Ashlen Thomason,
PhD,CCC-SLP

Dear Colleagues,

Ancient philosopher Meister Eckhart once said, “Be willing to be a beginner every single morning.” Whether you are fresh out of graduate school or a seasoned veteran, I believe that a common thread among professionals in speech pathology and audiology is a willingness to continually take on the challenge of being a beginner. Our fingers are ever on the reset button with the rapidly evolving advances in our assessment and treatment approaches and the need for flexibility in helping our clients overcome communication obstacles. Being at the relative beginning stages of my career as a speech-language pathologist, I am constantly humbled by the process of starting new, just when I had “it” figured out.

This cycle of ceaseless learning and adaptability has helped me adjust to a major new beginning in my life. I am thrilled to share with you all that my sweet daughter, Kendall, was born on April 25th. I knew that being a first time mother would be a new beginning. I did not expect to feel like such a beginner when it comes to issues like my baby’s lip and tongue tie, infantile reflux, and language stimulation routine; however, my precious baby girl reminds me each morning that I’m a novice.

If you enjoy being in the company of lifelong learners as much as I do, I hope you will join us at the 2018 ArkSHA Convention. The convention will be October 10th-12th in Little Rock at the DoubleTree and Robinson Center. We are excited about the lineup of presentations our Vice President of Continuing Education, Dr. Melanie Meeker, and Vice President-Elect for Continuing Education, Jennifer Fisher, have put together. ArkSHA has negotiated special room rates with the DoubleTree Hotel through September 18th. If you would
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Ashlen Thomason, PhD, CCC-SLP
Arkansas Children’s Hospital & UALR/UAMS Dept. of Aud & SLP
Little Rock, AR
(870) 307-9331
ThomasonAE@archildrens.org

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Easter Seals Arkansas - Outreach
Little Rock, AR
(501) 221-8437
jadams@eastersealsar.com

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Little Rock, AR
(501) 952-5786
leeann.griffith@sbcglobal.net

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cbohannon@artherapyoutreach.com

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(417) 380-2285
cfranklin2@uams.edu

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UALR/UAMS
Little Rock, AR
(501) 683-7641
cloudermill@uams.edu

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Harding University
Searcy, AR
(501) 279-4658
mmeeker@harding.edu

**Vice President-elect Continuing Education**
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Harding University
Searcy, AR
(501) 279-4666
jfisher1@harding.edu

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UCA Dept of Communication Sciences & Disorders
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dlance@uca.edu

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fcsheppard@comcast.net

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thurman@arkansaslobbying.com

ArkSHA MISSION STATEMENT
Connecting, learning and communicating with audiologists, speech-language pathologists, future professionals and consumers through:
- Advocacy
- Education
- Mentoring
- Networking
- Resources

INFORMATION CENTER
Arkansas Board of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology
101 E. Capitol, Suite 211
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-9180 Office
(501) 682-9181 Fax
Email: ABESPA@arkansas.gov
www.abespa.com

Arkansas Medicaid Website
www.medicaid.state.ar.us

Arkansas Department of Education
(501) 682-4475
www.arkansased.org

Arkansas Department of Health
(501) 661-2328

ASHA ACTION CENTER
(800) 498-2071
www.asha.org

The views expressed by the authors in this newsletter do not necessarily represent that of the board/association.

ArkSHA Office Contact Information
Account Executive: Marilyn Porterfield
Best Association Management
P.O. Box 24103
Little Rock, AR 72221
Phone: (501) 244-0621
Fax: (501) 224-0988
Email: arksha@arksha.org
www.arksha.org
like to be an exhibitor, promoting your product, organization, or business to around 500 expected attendees, please register online through the ArkSHA webpage.

I hope you all had a very happy Better Hearing and Speech Month. Our fantastic Poster Ambassadors, Zach Chamness [top photo] and Seth Mohorn [bottom photo], were able to meet with Governor Asa Hutchinson in late March (moved up from the usual May meeting) to ensure that health obstacles did not impede them from representing the incredible difference audiologists and speech-language pathologists make in the lives of our clients.

The Fiscal Session of the 91st General Assembly ended, immediately followed by special sessions. Our lobbyists worked hard to ensure that Arkansas lawmakers were aware of how budgetary issues impacted our important work. Our ASHA STAR, Cheri Stevenson, and the ArkSHA Board made our voices heard during the public comment period regarding updates to the Arkansas Medicaid Manual for Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapy Services and the DMS-60 prescription form to advocate for appropriate funding of our services to patients and to avoid potential threats of practice encroachment from behavioral therapists. ArkSHA continues its involvement in the ongoing conversations with the Arkansas Autism Legislative Task Force and its Ad Hoc Committee work on the Roles and Responsibilities document for speech-language pathologists working in the schools.

Stay connected regarding the latest with ArkSHA through our members-only Facebook page, the online forum through the ArkSHA website, and our quarterly newsletter. If you have neglected to renew your 2018 ArkSHA membership, we encourage you to “be a beginner” and update your ArkSHA membership online at http://www.arksha.org/. This is a great time to consider running for a 2019 ArkSHA Board position.

Cheers to new beginnings,

Ashlen Thomason, PhD, CCC-SLP
ArkSHA 2018 President
Greetings from Searcy to my fellow SLPs and audiologists. Summer time in Arkansas means slower schedules for some of us and hotter temperatures for all of us. As the current VP for Continuing Education, my summer time means convention planning. The theme for this year’s event is ArkSHA Under the Big Top – I am really looking forward to what our speakers will bring to the Natural State. Here’s a sneak peek into what you’ll find “inside the tent” at this year’s convention:

We will have a five-ring circus on Thursday! We have a variety of experts sharing six big hours of content “in the rings.” Based on overwhelming feedback requesting more information on fluency, I invited Craig Coleman and Mary Wiedner to join us from West Virginia. Craig is a board-certified specialist in fluency and fluency disorders, and Mary has a special interest in the counseling aspect of treating individuals with dysfluency. Whether fluency is your jive or you’d like to learn more about it, this is a can’t-miss team!

Another dazzling duo joining us on Thursday is Arkansas’ own Dr. Adrian Williamson and Jill Fitzpatrick from Arkansas Otolaryngology clinic. This team presented at ArkSHA two years ago and received rave reviews. I am so glad they’ve agreed to a repeat and extended their performance this year. Their presentation will include a review of anatomy and physiology related to voice as well as practical and evidence-based strategies for evaluating and treating dysphonia. Those of you who love case studies will not be disappointed here.

Coming all the way from the University of Pittsburgh to share her perspectives on dysphagia is Dr. Paula Leslie. Dr. Leslie directs the Doctor of Clinical Science in Medical Speech-Language Pathology. She maintains full clinical licenses in the USA and UK, where she is a Specialist Adviser to the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapy in swallowing disorders. She publishes, provides support to researchers, and provides continuing education across the health professions on complex clinical decision-making, ethics and end of life decisions in vulnerable populations. Among the topics she will address is the role of the SLP in dysphagia at the end of life – I hope those of you working with fragile populations of all ages will find some new and important content in Dr. Leslie’s ring of our “circus.”

If you are working with individuals with hearing loss, you will not want to miss Nanette Thompson, joining us from Denver. She has 25 years of experience providing diagnostic services and weekly speech, language, and listening therapy to families, children, and adults. She provides mentoring to professionals and school districts across the United States working to improve listening and spoken language outcomes for children with hearing loss. Thursday’s workshop is designed to equip you with tools to assess and increase the quality of the early intervention services you provide to children with hearing loss and their families. You will receive resources that will enhance the quality of your sessions and make planning more effective and efficient. Key strategies to maximize auditory skill development using daily routines, books, music, and play will be shared.
Rounding out Thursday’s program is Chris Bugaj, who joins us from Virginia. Chris brings expertise in AAC and assistive technology and I think you’ll really love his speaking style and the content he will share. Chris is a founding member of the Assistive Technology Team for Loudoun County Public Schools. He hosts The A.T.TIPSCAST, an award winning podcast featuring strategies to design educational experiences. Chris is also the author of ATEval2Go, an app for iPad that helps professionals in education perform technology assessments for students. He co-produces and co-authors the popular Night Light Stories podcast which features original stories for children of all ages. If you want to whet your appetite, you can find his TEDx talk on YouTube.

Are you excited yet? This year’s convention has been planned with YOU in mind. My personal goal has been to invite top-notch speakers with a wide range of expertise. I am hopeful that every single practitioner in the state will find sessions on the program that will help them better serve those on their caseloads. Whether your practice is comprised of preschoolers, grade-schoolers, adults or elders, I hope you see something here that interests you.

Mark your calendars for October 10-12 at the DoubleTree and Robinson Center in Little Rock. From the opening session on Wednesday evening to the last session on Friday, you won’t want to miss a minute of this year’s exciting convention. If you aren’t already, please follow ArkSHA on Facebook. You’ll know you’re in the correct spot when you see the circus tent! Pop some corn and keep your eyes there for more information on Friday’s slate of speakers, featuring a mix of national and local talent. I look forward to sharing some cotton candy with you in October!

Melanie Meeker, PhD, CCC-SLP
Call for ArkSHA Honors and Awards
Submit your nomination by July 15, 2018

Arkansas has the best of the best! Please ‘spotlight’ a colleague/mentor/professional in the fields of speech-language pathology or audiology by submitting a nomination for honors and awards. Nominate individuals for the following awards:

**Louis M. Dicarlo Award for Clinical Achievement:** Individuals demonstrating significant contributions to advancing knowledge in clinical practice within the past 6 years are eligible for nomination by state associations to receive a recognition award.

**Frank R. Kleffner Clinical Career Award:** Individuals demonstrating significant contributions to clinical science and practice over a 20-year career are eligible for nomination by fellow professionals to receive a recognition award.

**Paula J. Gober Public School Award:** Recognizes distinguished clinical service by an individual in a public school setting.

**Honors of the Association:** The highest honor the association can give and recognizes distinguished contributions to the field of communication disorders. It is limited to members of the Association.

**Research Award:** Recognizes individuals who have made significant contributions to the research literature related to the professions of speech pathology or audiology.

**Audiology Award:** Recognizes distinguished service by an audiologist.

Nominations may be submitted online at www.arksha.org or directly to Jeff Adams, Past President, by July 15, 2018, at jadams@eastersealsar.com or to the ArkSHA office at arksha@arksha.org.

Awards and honors recipients, as well as Poster Ambassadors, will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony at the Annual Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, October 10-12.

Call for Poster Ambassadors
Submit your nomination by July 15, 2018

ArkSHA selects up to one child and one adult poster ambassador each year to represent the dedicated work our professionals do to make a difference in the lives of individuals and their families. We have all had clients that truly inspired us as professionals. You may consider someone who has made significant gains in therapy, someone who has overcome insurmountable odds, or someone who is irresistible, charming, full of charisma and adorable. Write a letter and tell ArkSHA who should be the 2018 ambassador!

Nominations can be submitted online at www.arksha.org and should include contact information for both the nominee and the person making the nomination. Please submit a summary of why this person should be selected as Poster Ambassador and a picture of the nominee if available.

Please submit all nominations directly to Jeff Adams, Past President, by July 15, 2018, at jadams@eastersealsar.com or to the ArkSHA office at arksha@arksha.org.
It was my honor to represent ArkSHA this year at the Council of State Association Presidents (CSAP) Spring Conference in St. Louis! This conference is first and foremost leadership training for state association presidents, but it also is a forum for collaboration and networking among the leaders of state associations and ASHA. The key message at this year’s conference was COLLABORATION. The only way to be competitive, both in advocacy efforts as an association as well as professionally, is through collaboration. We discussed changes facing speech pathologists and audiologists across the country and how to effectively meet the diverse needs of all of the members of our profession.

According to Jeffrey Regan, Director of Government Relations and Public Policy with ASHA, there are two big issues facing members on a national level. First is the impact of upcoming elections on Medicaid funding. Another significant change quickly approaching will be the reauthorization of IDEA in 2019. Both of these issues will impact the provision of our services, despite the setting. The importance of advocacy, both at a state and national level, has never seemed as critical as it does in our current professional climate. Many states, including our own, are dealing with issues that affect the sustainability of our profession. These issues include universal licensure, recruiting and retaining new leaders, increasing diversity, and licensure and funding for other professionals (music therapists, ABA therapists).

I met with leaders from other states to strategize how to best track bills in the state legislature that impact our profession. We discussed how to effectively utilize our advocacy efforts collectively between states, with ASHA, and with our own lobbyists. But the most important take-away from the conference for me personally is that none of this can happen without our membership. Numbers matter. There are 198,000 members of ASHA. That means that collectively, ASHA members have a significant economic impact. The same holds true at the state level. This means every member matters. Every voice counts. In order for ArkSHA to effectively advocate for our profession at a state level, we must have a significant economic impact. Your membership matters. Reach out to your colleagues and encourage them to become members if they aren’t already. The ArkSHA Board is here to serve you and advance the role of our profession. If Jeff (Past-President), Ashlen (Current-President), or I (President-Elect) can help you in any way, we are just a phone call or email away.

LeeAnn Griffith, MS, CCC-SLP

Individually, we are one drop.
Together, we are an ocean.
-Ryunosuke Satoro
ATTENTION Students!
Apply for the Betty Bass Student Scholarship by October 1

Download the scholarship application online at www.arksha.org/images/pdf/scholarship.pdf

Scholarship Guidelines:
1. A Faculty Advisor must verify enrollment and graduate GPA at the time of application, and append a short letter of support.
2. The applicant must be an Arkansas resident who plans to work in-state after graduation.
3. The applicant must submit a short narrative explaining their financial need for the scholarship.
4. The applicant’s involvement in professional organizations such as ArkSHA, NSSLHA, etc. should be emphasized.
5. Both professional and personal letters of recommendation must be submitted with the application (minimum 3, maximum 5).

Scholarship Donation Form

We are able to offer scholarships to our student members each year thanks to your generous donations throughout the year, and our social and auction at the convention. You can donate in honor of or in memory of someone, if you choose. Current students are the future of our industry, and we are glad we are able to support them when needed.

Name: __________________________________ Phone: _______________________
Address: ________________________________ City: ______________ ST: ____ Zip: __________
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I would like to make a contribution to the ArkSHA Scholarship Fund in the amount of $ _______________

□ In Memory    □ In Honor of: ____________________________________________

Check #: ______________
Visa/MasterCard # _______-_______-_______-_______
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