

RITEVIEW

Spring 2021



Kristin Uhler, Ph.D.
Kelley Family/Schlessman
Family Scottish Rite Masons
Chair in Childhood Language
Disorders

I hope that this Spring RiteView finds you and your families safe and healthy. Our lives are beginning to look a bit more normal than they have over the past 15 months. While several COVID-19 precautions remain in place and likely will for the foreseeable future, I look forward to being able to begin traveling to our RiteCare Partners this summer. We will start on the Western Slope to introduce Mr. L. Bryant Harris, executive secretary of the Scottish Rite Foundation, to them in person.

We are fortunate to provide high-quality speech, language, and learning services to ensure continuity of care for children! Nearly every RiteCare Site continues to provide speech and language services both in-person and via telepractice. The increased utilization of telepractice has enhanced our understanding of the important utilization of this technology to support families and the challenges some families face with limited access to appropriate technology, high-speed internet, and sometimes even age-appropriate toys. This transition to telepractice included our First Steps Camp (see page 7) over the past year. First Steps Camp provides families with educational opportunities which facilitate and aid in better communication with their child who is new to the utilization of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices. Unfortunately, Talking with Technology had to be canceled this year due to COVID-19, but we are excited to resume this Camp in July 2022!

We are reminded that communication is a true gift as we celebrate May is Better Hearing and Speech Month each year. This RiteView demonstrates how our RiteCare and Treasure Chest partners are achieving better communication for all children. These efforts would not have been possible without the Scottish Rite Foundation. With the Scottish Rite Foundation's help, we make every month "better hearing and speech month" for so many children. I hope you will be as delighted as I was to read about the creative ways our RiteCare partners across the state have successfully continued to meet the needs of the children and families in their communities.

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Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado Update

The vision of the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado is that all Colorado children with language disorders will have the opportunity to receive treatment and care.

Our vision statement is simple, but it lays out a vast amount of work. The last year has been tremendously challenging for our partners to ensure their clients can access the services they need.



To that end, telepractice gained better acceptance, and utilization has increased, resulting in a transformation in service delivery during the pandemic, resulting in a change in service delivery for families, children, and practitioners.

Historically, it has been a struggle to ensure that there are services available to children in rural Colorado, particularly on the eastern plains. The Scottish Rite Foundation's partnerships on the eastern plains sadly ended, resulting in scholarship support ending in Sterling in 2013 and La Junta in 2014.

The closest in-person RiteCare services for those children on the eastern plains are now at Children's Hospital Colorado in Aurora and Children's Therapy Care locations in Colorado Springs. While the COVID-19 pandemic has been a terrible challenge for everyone, technology that did not exist in 2013 and 2014 has evolved. The latest secure communications software offers new opportunities to serve children in rural areas, which are challenging to support physically. Dr. Uhler and the Scottish Rite Foundation Board have begun to discuss how we might leverage the new technologies to reach out and continue to pursue our mission "to serve all Colorado children." Creative solutions and community connections come from collaborations like those between Dr. Uhler, the Board, and you. As in the previous article for winter 2021, I have another request. If you have ideas on how we might work with community resources on the eastern plains of Colorado, would you contact me via email at ritecare@scottishritefoundation.org. For your Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado to achieve the goal of serving "all Colorado children," it will take all of you to extend the message of charitable support and creative partnerships.

Submitted by: Bryant Harris, Executive Secretary Scottish Rite Foundation



New Scottish Rite Foundation Partnership



Centro de la Familia de Utah is a nonprofit organization that promotes healthy and engaged communities by advocating for children's educational success. Working with children and families since 1975, Centro has excelled at managing early outreach and educational programs among under-served communities in both urban and rural areas. In 2020, Centro expanded its Head Start services to children in seven counties throughout Colorado and was known in the state as Centro Colorado. We now serve about 1,200 children in Utah, Colorado, and Nevada.

For the past 16 years, the Scottish Rite Foundation has been an awesome partner for the Western Slope Head Start program. Through this partnership, children experiencing speech and language delays received additional support that parents used at home to supplement what was happening in the classroom. The program has been hugely successful in helping children overcome speech and language delays.

Centro is excited to continue the partnership between Head Start and the Scottish Rite Foundation. Serving children who are experiencing developmental delays is one of our passions. We are revamping our approach by moving from a lending program to providing fun, education-driven materials to stay with the families. Parents will continue to support their children's learning and development for multiple years by leaving these resources in their homes.

Centro is very thankful for this partnership with the Scottish Rite Foundation and is committed to making a difference in children's lives.

Submitted by Carmen Marsh, Developmental Specialist Centro Colorado, Grand Junction





Children's Speech & Reading Center

Program Update

As we enter the summer months, the Children's Speech and Reading Center is experiencing exciting changes! We recently welcomed several new staff members to our team including two speech-language pathologists:

Cheryl Campbell - Cheryl earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Emporia State University and a M.A in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Kansas. She moved to Colorado in 2018 after having her own private practice in Alaska for 15 years. Cheryl has experience with a variety of communication disorders but specializes in pediatric articulation/phonological disorders and receptive/expressive language disorders. She loves being able to help families celebrate communication milestones that others may take for granted.



Libby Cravens - Libby grew up in the NASA community in Houston and spent most of her adult life in Austin, Texas. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a M.A. degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders- Speech-Language Pathology after double majoring in Speech-Language Pathology and Human Relations as an undergrad. She is an experienced school-based therapist who has worked with children ages 3-18 with a wide variety of speech and language needs and specialized in assessments. She is proficient in American Sign Language and was the team lead for a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child Study Team that conducted evaluations across the state of New Jersey. She is excited for the opportunity to collaborate more closely with families and to serve children individually.



Currently, we are offering therapy services both virtually and in person. We have seen success with the use of teletherapy and have enjoyed learning new therapy strategies and techniques. Several of our staff members are transitioning back to the office and we are thankful to be able to work together again. We look forward to continuing to increase our collaboration, knowledge, and skills to best meet the needs of our clients during these unique times. We are also grateful for our growing group of professionals and the ability to provide speech/language, reading, and pre-literacy services to additional families.

Submitted by Alicia Richardson, Speech Language Pathologist, Children's Speech & Reading Center, Ft. Collins

In the Spotlight at St. Mary's Medical Center Amy Brophy-Neilsen, M.S., CCC-SLP

Lisa: Tell me a little about yourself.

Amy: I started as an SLP in 1980 with my first job at Hilltop Rehabilitation Hospital, which was a freestanding outpatient rehab center with adults and pediatrics. After 15 years, St. Mary's Hospital purchased Hilltop, and I have remained at St. Mary's for the rest of my 41 year career. I have had lots of opportunities throughout my career as an SLP—contract work at a VA hospital, taught at Colorado Mesa University for 10 years, contract work for school districts, and creation of Life Adjustment Program for head injured patients in Grand Junction. I currently am the supervisor of outpatient pediatric therapies at the St. Mary's Life Center and supervise OT, PT, and Speech along with continuing to see patients. I also continue to work for the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind CHIP program. In 1986, I became involved in the Scottish Rite program, who have helped us grow our programs, and I have continued dreams of growing our program with SRF.

Lisa: If my child was to have you as a therapist, what could I expect?

Amy: I'm not a sit at the table type of therapist. I like kids to move. You can expect to see me moving around and using more of a gym space to treat kiddos. I do a lot of motor movement paired with language and speech built around that. I think it makes it more memorable, helps build pathways, and motor planning stays. We work together as an interdisciplinary team, so I have access to sensory and motor activities. It's fun to collaborate and do team-based therapy!



Interviewed by Lisa Powers, Speech Language Pathologist, Associate Clinical Manager Children's Hospital Colorado

Lisa: What is the funniest or most memorable thing that has happened during your therapy sessions?

Amy: I wish I would have kept a book of the comments kids say—the things they say are such a crack up! I did have a kid doing a sensory activity related to worms. We brought in fishing worms for him to interact with. He was at the table and started vomiting immediately. We found out after that he gets sick from movement stuff. Definitely a learning experience!

Lisa: What is most rewarding about speech-language pathology?

Amy: The best thing is when you see a kiddo you worked with that has grown up or a mom says you worked wonders. One of my kids was behind in speech and language and later graduated as valedictorian. His mom came and recognized that I was the one that gave him that start. It's great to see kids accomplish things after you have given them a start. I also enjoy seeing families in the community that remember working with me.

Lisa: How has the Scottish Rite Foundation (SRF) impacted the care you provide?

Amy: Scottish Rite has impacted the types of people we can see. We see people that couldn't be here without SRF because the families can't afford their copays to get kids into therapy. Also, families are so committed when they have applied for funding and receive it. Those families are really engaged in their child's care and do home programs with their kids. We have been able to create some great programs too. We created communication kits that we check out to families (pre-COVID) that would never have happened if we didn't have SRF. Our connection with SRF and other affiliated SRF programs in the state has also allowed us to attend conferences and trainings so we can learn from other experts. We recently finished autism training with Amy Frisbie at Children's Colorado. I have the joy of sharing with families that they have been approved for funding and see the families' gratitude!

Lisa: If you could spend the day with some of the SRF Masons at your favorite Colorado attraction, where would that be?

Amy: The Denver Zoo. There's so much there to see, and I'm an animal lover. I love to watch nature!

Lisa: And what would you want to say to the SRF Masons?

Amy: Oh my goodness! I respect them so much. They are a work of God with how much they do for families. The one little person they support in therapy has a ripple effect and has triple or quadruple the impact. Our relationship with Scottish Rite is the reason I have stayed at St. Mary's for my career. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! They do remarkable work.

Program Updates Memorial Regional Health

This past quarter our pediatric department has grown—we have added a PRN Speech Language Pathologist and a part-time Occupational Therapist. We are thrilled to have more providers on our team to serve more children. The need for therapy continues in our area and we are excited to better support the needs of our community.

Though our county has been in the “green zone,” at Memorial Regional Health, we continue to diligently follow our COVID protocols to keep patients, families, and providers safe. The vast majority of our services are in person, but we are still offering teletherapy for patients that request it.

We were sad to see our monthly Autism training come to an end; however, we are so thankful for all that we learned through the training supported by the Scottish Rite Foundation. We learned invaluable lessons that 60+ children in our program have benefitted from.

Being a part of the Scottish Rite Foundation is a true honor and we feel privileged to be a part of this network.

Submitted by: Colleen Boyle, Speech Language Pathologist, Memorial Regional Health, Craig

The Piñon Project - Treasure Chest Program Serving Families in the Community!

Maggie Tevault with Piñon Project’s Treasure Chest Program was invited to present on Piñon Early Childhood Programs at the Talk, Grow Learn Virtual Summit; a community event presented by their local United Way’s Team Up collaboration. The TGL Action Team focuses on building language and early literacy skills for young children. The Treasure Chest Program is an excellent fit for this mission! Attendees were present from agencies and organizations throughout the state including home visiting programs, community service organizations, medical and wellness facilities, local libraries, and other family serving organizations. Participants gathered to discuss the importance of early language and literacy acquisition and how it leads to future success as children transition from learning to read to reading to learn, and how that translates into school success and graduation rates.

Connections were made with potential partners throughout the southwest corner of the state to support awareness of available programs. Piñon continues to be grateful for the ongoing support of Scottish Rite Foundation and the important part that The Treasure Chest program plays in building strong futures for the children in our community!

(pictured Piñon Staff Sandra Rosales-Monge using a Treasure Chest with family)

Submitted by Maggie Tevault, Treasure Chest Program Coordinator, Cortez



Children's Hospital Colorado Spring 2021 First Steps Camp – Virtual

The First Steps Camp returned to the virtual platform this spring and coached 6 families to better communication with their child who has recently received their first speech generating device.

Families met with Children's Hospital Colorado speech-language pathologists who specialize in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) as well as other guests for 2 hours weekly for 6 weeks via Zoom. Weekly meetings focused on educating families on strategies they can use with their child. Specific feedback was provided to families in engaging activities with their child. In addition, families broke out into smaller groups where two families could chat about their experiences using AAC and share ideas.

The program was hugely successful. In pre/post surveys, families showed excellent growth across the many areas of communication and training we assessed. In one data point, families responded to the prompt: "I understand how I can help my child communicate." This is the goal of the program, and family responses continued to show the benefits of having specific education and training. See graphs below.

Graph 1. Pre-Survey Data showed an average of 3.3

● Strongly Agree	0
● Agree	5
● Neutral	1
● Disagree	2
● Strongly disagree	0



Graph 2. Post-Survey Data showed an average of 4.3

● Strongly Agree	3
● Agree	6
● Neutral	0
● Disagree	0
● Strongly disagree	0



In addition, families specifically shared how grateful they are for this program. One parent shared: This program has helped me recognize additional ways to help [my son] communicate. Throughout the class, there has been less frustration when it comes to communicating, because now we understand how to motivate and encourage [our son], as well as what is generally helpful and what is not."

The AAC Team and Audiology, Speech, and Learning Services are very grateful of the support the Scottish Rite and Rollie R. Kelley Family Fund who have so generously supported the AAC Camps, First Steps Camp and Talking With Technology Camp.

Submitted by: Caroline Woeber, Speech Language Pathologist, Children's Hospital Colorado

Summer Therapy Programs at St. Mary's Life Center

Once again, at the Life Center in Grand Junction we can offer speech and language therapy groups, on site, and without plexiglass. Although, masks are still part of our dress code.

To date, we have a total of 24 different therapy groups. Groups are available for Language and Social Communication for 3 to 4 years old, 4 to 5 years old, 5 to 6 years old, 6 to 7 years old, 7 to 8 years old, 8 to 9 years old, 9 to 10 years old, and 10 to 12 years old and 15 to 17 years old. Executive Function Groups are available for 7 years old and one group for 13 to 14 years old. Phonology/Articulation Groups are available for 4 to 5 years old, 5 to 6 years old, 7 to 8 years old, and 10 to 11 years old.

To make sure we were keeping "social distancing" in mind, we had to get creative with our treatment spaces, so we have expanded our treatment areas to include one of our conference rooms and a previously used physician's office, along with our regular treatment areas. We are all excited about the opportunity to provide group speech and language therapy, it allows us to facilitate learning in a realistic setting. The children not only get modeling and support from the therapist but also from their peers to help build their confidence and create new friendships. The children are not only the learners but they are also the teachers, creating the internal feeling of success.

The group setting is not only beneficial, it is fun for the children and the therapists also are enjoying the opportunity to be engaged with a group of children/ young adults, once again. One more step in getting back to normal!

Submitted by Amy Brophy Neilsen Scottish Rite Program Director, St. Mary's Hospital Grand Junction



Spring 2021 University Northern Colorado Program Updates

The UNC SLP Program successfully closed another spring semester and our second-year students are preparing to officially graduate, though some students walked in May (see photo). On June 5th, three first-year students represented the program at the annual Migrant Family Reading Festival held at UNC's University Center. Liza Fate, Nikki Schachter, and Kaitlin Enge have all participated in the Scottish Rite Foundation funded Greeley Treasure Chest Program and talked with families about the program while having fun reading and creating bookmarks with the children. We are excited to spread the word about the program and look forward to more in-person events and Treasure Chest sessions in the fall semester!



Top from left to right: Christine Provencher, Courtney McKibbon, Christen Leedom, Libby Schiller, Claire Volzke, Kristen Smith
Bottom from left to right: Hannah Dahl, Megan Schumacher, Rachel Lowery, Madeline Baretta



Reading Festival graduate students: Liza Fate, Kaitlin Enge, and Nikki Schachter



Submitted by: Kim Murza, RiteCare Program Director, University Northern Colorado