



ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association



MELANIE MCDONALD ★ PRESIDENT

"Happiness lies in the joy of achievement and the thrill of creative effort."

—Franklin Roosevelt

As I come to the end of my Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (TSHA) presidency, I look back at the achievements accomplished by creative effort of the leaders and volunteers with whom I've served. We have grown another year to a record number of members! The members are excited about our momentum and are jumping right on this fast moving train! It has been an honor

to serve as your president. Together, we have made significant positive changes and growth. I asked you to volunteer, and you did. I asked you to become leaders or continue your leadership journey, and you did. I asked for your support, and you gave it. We asked you to speak up, and you did. We are giving back to the communities we serve in many ways, such as trading our presidential reception at Convention for activities such as book drives and donating school supplies to those in need in our communities around the state. Through these efforts, we have saved money to use for additional programs under the TSHA Executive Council to help further our mission and strategic plan. This year, we have many new, exciting committees, and the work I see behind the scenes is staggering! Our new website is up and running with many additions and more capabilities for members. Unique in this country, TSHA completed our commitment of giving to members the \$300,000 for student loan repayments. Our new logo/rebranding has been very well received, keeping our lone star and colors and adding a speech bubble! We

have more opportunities for resources, and although our state association management company is in Washington, DC, we now have numerous offices throughout Texas.

This annual report is full of exciting achievements accomplished this year, and it has not been without creative effort! Thank you for your support, leadership, volunteerism, and friendship. I remain on the TSHA Executive Board as Past President for one more year, and I look forward to the leadership under our next TSHA President, **Judy Rudebusch**! Please join us or let us know what we can do for your and those you serve!

"A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination."

—Nelson Mandela

These committee chairs and their committee members are a formidable combination! See what the committees under this presidency have accomplished this year.

PUBLICATIONS BOARD

Peggy Kipping, Chair

The TSHA Publications Board, chaired by **Peggy Kipping**, continued to monitor and direct the production of accurate, timely, and informative print and electronic publications for TSHA members during 2014-2015. Highlights for the past year included the design and production of six issues of the *Communicologist* and the TSHA 2013-2014 Annual Report. **Jan Lougeay** and **Lisa Carver** began their roles

as alternating editors of the *Communicologist* on July 1. Peggy Kipping served as TSHA website editor, **Becca Kelley** served as TSHA's social media editor, Past President **Judi Keller** and President-Elect **Judy Rudebusch** collaborated on the editing of the TSHA Policy & Procedure Manual, **Donise Pearson** served as the TSHA Publications Board member at-large, and President **Melanie McDonald** served as ex-officio member of the TSHA Publications Board. The work of the TSHA Publications Board was also supported by **Shelby O'Neill**, who served as the TSHA publications editor and as an ex-officio member of the TSHA Publications Board, and **Amie Rittler**, who served as the TSHA publications designer.

In January 2015, TSHA Executive Board (EB) members voted to initiate the publication of a biweekly e-zine featuring aggregated content from TSHA publications, the latest TSHA news and CE opportunities, as well as featured content from other sources that we believe to be of value or interest to members. The inaugural issue of the e-zine published on March 24 and was disseminated to TSHA members via email.

Looking ahead to 2015-2016, **Peggy Kipping** will continue in her role as the chair of the TSHA Publications Board and ex-officio member of the TSHA EB. The TSHA Publications Board will continue to work with members of the TSHA EB to publish the *Communicologist*, the Annual Report, and other publications as assigned by the TSHA EB.

PAST VICE PRESIDENTS VILLAGE (PV2)

Gina Glover, Chair

A new committee with incredible talent and experience that was established under this presidency is the TSHA Past Vice Presidents Village (PV2). This committee was established to assist the Past Presidents' Powerhouse in accomplishing assigned tasks; developing, growing, and training leadership; and supporting current leaders. This committee also completes any additional tasks assigned by the President and/or Executive Board. **Gina Glover** is the current chair of this dynamic committee and shared the following goals and activities.

The committee was given many ideas and suggestions for objectives to support the above goal/objective of the strategic plan. The committee continues to review the suggestions and determine the priorities as well as action steps to achieve the goal.

Suggested activities:

- Serve as advisory group for current vice presidents (VPs)
- Serve as a resource for various topics for the current EB
- Support leadership development through personal connections
- Work with past and current VPs to identify potential leaders
- Reach out to potential leaders to mentor, support, and encourage them to take on TSHA leadership positions
 - Develop and present Convention sessions for TSHA volunteers who could become future TSHA leaders
 - Collaborate with the Leadership Task Force under the VP for Research and Development and coordinators for the Oscar Mauzy Leadership Conference
 - Represent a pool of potential candidates for TSHA President
 - Represent a pool of potential TSHF candidates for positions
 - Collaborate on projects with PPP if requested
 - Other tasks as assigned by the Executive Board and/or President
 - Training of new VPs by PV2
 - Reach out to SLP/audiologists in Texas who are not members to become members

As of June 2015, the chair identified 16 past Vice Presidents who have agreed to be active members of the committee. These include **Gina Glover, Amy Marciniak, Lauren Mathews, JoAnn Wiechmann,**



Melissa Sweeney, Jan Lougeay, Rebecca Gonzalez, Keri Gonzales, Tori Gustafson, Bobbie Kay Turkett, Olivia Whitehead Brown, Meredith Moore Myrick, Bess Sirmon Taylor, Judy Erwin, Debra Bankston, and Julie Noel.

The PV2 welcomes any TSHA past vice presidents who would like to become involved in this committee. If interested, please contact Gina Glover at gina.glover@fwisd.org.

HONORS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Jan Lougeay, Chair

Chair of Honors and Awards **Jan Lougeay** and her committee presented numerous awards at the TSHA 2015 Convention and wrote articles for the *Communicologist*.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Amy Marciniak, Chair

Chair of Nominations and Elections **Amy Marciniak** and her committee searched and reviewed nominations for the TSHA EB for President-Elect-Elect and the following VP positions: Professional Services, Information and Marketing, and Audiology. The following candidates were slated:

President: **Bobbie Kay Turkett** and **Gina Glover**

Vice President of Professional Services: **Lisa Carver** and **Pamela Laing**

Vice President of Public Information and Marketing: **Norma Reyes** (was elected by acclamation at TSHA Convention)

Vice President of Audiology: **Leigh Ann Reel** (was elected by acclamation at TSHA Convention)

A *Communicologist* article was written to introduce the candidates, and nominations were accepted during keynote at the TSHA 2015 Convention in San Antonio. The electronic election system was sent out to membership to vote for President and Vice President of Professional Services. When elections were closed, President Melanie McDonald and Nominations Chair Amy Marciniak contacted all the candidates to share the results of the election. The winners were announced in the June issue of the *Communicologist*.

ETHICAL PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Melissa Sweeney, Chair

Chair of Ethical Practices **Melissa Sweeney** continued to monitor ethical issues for the Association and reported no activity.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Lynn Flahive, Chair

Chair of Leadership Development **Lynn Flahive** received contact information for individuals who expressed an interest in volunteering for TSHA. Many of these during this quarter came from completing the volunteer form that was included in all registration packets at Convention. Areas of interest on the form fall under various vice presidencies. Based on their expressed interest, the individual's contact information was sent to a past VP in that area. Past vice presidents on this committee include **Keri Gonzalez, Melissa Sweeney, Tiffany Leach, and Jan Lougeay**. The past VP contacted the person and discussed various committees and task forces. Based on that information, the past VP sent Lynn their interest area. Lynn then notified the current VP of the member's interest and his or her contact information. Six members were contacted and placed with current VPs. There will be more follow-ups during the summer based on Convention



attendee responses on the post-Convention survey. The list of individuals who noted they wanted to be involved was compiled by the state office. The current VPs will now review the list to eliminate any members who may already be serving. The final culled list will then be used to make member contact.



GRADUATE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Lindsey Lee and Tiffany Cruz

Graduate Student Representatives **Lindsey Lee** and **Tiffany Cruz** completed the following tasks:

- Published articles in the *Communicologist* to foster student involvement in TSHA
- Collaborated with the VP of Public Information and Marketing to create videos for the Student Visit PowerPoint
- Collaborated with the VP of Government and Social Policy in finding donors and contacting vendors for student loan repayment
- Partnered with the VP of Social and Governmental Policy to increase student involvement in the 2015 Capitol Visit Day
- Updated the University Contact List with advisor and National Student Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NSSLHA) officer information
- Fostered professional relationships between peers to collaborate and increase student involvement in TSHA
- Contacted universities to volunteer at TSHA Convention
- Contacted universities and volunteers about the open Graduate Student Representative position on the EB

PAST PRESIDENTS' TASK FORCE

Donise Pearson, Chair

The Past Presidents' Task Force, chaired by **Donise Pearson**, worked diligently to provide historical perspectives and answer questions for TSHA EB members as needed. Several past presidents mentored EB members, and others reviewed policy and procedures as requested. Donise co-chaired the Oscar Mauzy Leadership short course held during the TSHA 2015 Convention. Many past presidents participated in the leadership short course, including **Denise Barringer**, **Lynn Flahive**, **Larry Higdon**, **Martha McGlothlin**, **Sherry Sancibrian**, and **Cherry Wright**. Information from the ASHA Leadership Development Program was made available through Donise to the TSHA leadership initiative committee to facilitate endeavors for future leadership academy planning.



ASHA ADVOCATES

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) State Advocates had a booth in the Exhibit Hall at the TSHA 2015 Convention for the first time. This gave them exposure so TSHA members could ask questions and participate in discussions on related topics. The state advocates attended the ASHA Advocate meetings together at ASHA and kept TSHA members apprised of national issues that affect TSHA members and consumers.

STATE MEDICARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SMAC)

Kate Hutcheson and Lisa Milliken, Co-Chairs

The State Medicare Advisory Committee (SMAC) will be changing its name to State Advocates for Medicare Policy (STAMP). Co-Chairs **Kate Hutcheson** and **Lisa Milliken** attended monthly calls to learn new information as well as to receive confirmation on other recent trends. They participated with the SMAC/ASHA team to develop a proposed Ideal National Coverage Policy (with coding and

medical necessity guidelines) for speech-language pathology and audiology. They also participated on a medical forum presentation at the TSHA Convention to present information and to address questions of the post-acute members in the audience. They responded to emails and calls from TSHA members to address their questions of coding and recent LCD changes/requirements

STATE EDUCATION ADVOCACY LEADER (SEAL)

Linda Keesee

State Education Advocacy Leader (SEAL) **Linda Keesee** attended monthly conference calls and ASHA meetings, and responded to email and phone requests for information from school-based members across the state. Through monthly phone calls and web postings with ASHA, Linda shared information on topics related to school practice in Texas and provided feedback to ASHA on initiatives and current issues affecting school-based SLPs. She presented at the TSHA Convention on ASHA resources for school-based SLPs.

STATE ADVOCATE FOR REIMBURSEMENT (STAR)

Shannon Butkus

State Advocate for Reimbursement (STAR) **Shannon Butkus** advocated for TSHA members by monthly conference calls and meetings with ASHA. Shannon made numerous trips to the capitol, responded to more than 350 emails, met with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) on behalf of TSHA, and distributed documents to membership. Shannon shared documents with other states as a model of negotiations. Her survey on proposed rate cuts generated more than 1,300 responses in just over a 24-hour period, allowing the Texas Legislature to know the likely impact of the proposed rate cuts on our consumers. The Senate leadership's feedback signified they were impressed with the information provided. Shannon served as a mentor to new STARs in other parts of the country. She presented sessions at the TSHA Convention, wrote articles for the *Communicologist*, and fielded countless phone calls.

Some testified on TSHA's behalf in Austin, and all attended the meetings held by ASHA. This visibility, through regular contact, gave TSHA members a voice for issues they faced daily. They communicated with the TSHA Executive Board through President Melanie McDonald.

JUDY RUDEBUSCH ★ PRESIDENT-ELECT

STRATEGIC PLANNING

During the January 2015 Executive Board (EB) meeting, the TSHA EB reviewed and affirmed continuing commitment to the 2014–2016 Strategic Plan. Since we are in the middle of the plan, the EB reviewed the TSHA Vision, TSHA Mission, priorities, and progress toward meeting our goals. No changes to the plan were recommended.

FINANCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) met in September following the EC meeting and gave input regarding the EB's proposed budget. Recommendations were made to adopt a balanced budget per TSHA policy.

The FAC had a phone meeting on February 25, 2015. The FAC:

- Reviewed the current status of the adjusted operating budget, which is balanced; and
- Received and acted on advice from Bob Green of Wells Fargo Financial Advisors regarding closing a money market account in the amount of \$154,454.75, calling one CD in short-term reserves for \$100,000, and selling stock/mutual funds in the amount of \$100,000 for a total of \$354,454.75.
- This amount provided funds to cover the \$300,000 obligation for student loan repayment and \$54,000 in other non-operating one-time expenses.

The FAC met June 6, 2015, to discuss two matters—aligning the fiscal year with the membership year and reviewing the structure and operation of the Financial Advisory Committee. Recommendations were provided to the Executive Board.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Policies and Procedures (P&P) document was put online with a search function. This is intended to increase access and functionality for use of the P&P. Wording changes to the nominations policies and procedures were provided to the EB at the March 18, 2015, meeting.

LORI COLLETTI ★ VICE PRESIDENT FOR SOCIAL AND GOVERNMENTAL POLICY

PRIORITIES

The priorities of the Social and Governmental Policy committees and task forces have been to support and inform TSHA's legislative goals and activities. Our team has continued to work to build members' awareness of the ways that TSHA represents the needs of our professionals and consumers in the Texas Legislature and to develop and use new methods to share legislative information with our members.

Our legislative priorities were three-fold: (1) To avoid being moved to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) as recommended by the Sunset Commission, or retaining our right to write our own rules if the move to TDLR could not be avoided; (2) To minimize the impact of reimbursement rate reductions on speech-language pathology service providers and consumers, and to position TSHA as a resource for the Texas Legislature and Health and Human Services Commission with regard to reimbursement rates and cost containment of Medicaid benefits; and (3) To move forward with student loan repayment for SLPs and audiologists who opt to work in Texas public schools.

LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Regarding our legislative priorities, the results were as follows. It became apparent that a move from the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) was inevitable; as a result, TSHA supported moving our licensure board from DSHS to the Executive Council for Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. **Larry Higdon** and **Mark Hanna** secured a sponsor for our proposal (HB 4113), **Rep. Garnet Coleman**. Unfortunately, it became clear that legislators on the Sunset Advisory Commission would not support our bill, and we were unable to move forward with it. With a move to TDLR appearing inevitable, TSHA's legislative team shifted gears and focused on ensuring that we would retain a board with the authority to write our rules for standards of care and scope of practice. To that end, TSHA's legislative team and **Michelle Mendiotta** met with representatives of TDLR. The meeting provided an opportunity to help TDLR representatives understand the complexity and broad scope of our professions. Representatives of TDLR were invited to attend TSHA's Convention to enhance their understanding. These efforts had the desired result, in that TDLR representatives appeared to develop a greater understanding of our professions. TSHA's legislative team was successful in negotiating an amendment to SB 202, the bill that would move our licensure to TDLR. That amendment would require any rule changes related to our standards of care and scope of practice to be initiated and passed by our Advisory Board. In order for proposed rule changes to become effective, TDLR must ultimately approve them. The bill, with our amendment attached, passed and was signed into law by the Governor. This outcome was a compromise, but it met our primary goal of retaining the right to write our rules.

TSHA's persistent efforts to serve as a resource with regard to reimbursement rates and Medicaid benefits were met with some success. TSHA's legislative team met on several occasions with staffers



of key senators (Sens. Nelson and Schwertner) to discuss proposed cuts of \$200 million (85 percent of which were proposed to be cut from speech therapy services). TSHA's team provided sound cost-containment suggestions that appeared to be well-received. Ultimately, TSHA was able to gain credibility by helping the senators and their staffers understand that most of the proposed \$200 million could be saved by restructuring Medicaid benefits for therapy through restructuring the number of sessions allowable for different disabilities based on medical necessity and severity of disability. With input from ASHA and other reliable sources, TSHA calculated that as much as \$140 million in savings could be attained by the altered benefit plan, substantially reducing the dollar amount needed to be achieved through rate reductions. How these changes will ultimately be enacted is still to be determined. Following the end of the legislative session, TSHA representatives were invited to attend an HHSC meeting on June 11. **Shannon Butkus** attended and shared TSHA's message. HHSC and legislative staffers appeared to hear that message. Members of TSHA's legislative team will attend future HHSC meetings to continue the effort to mitigate the negative impact on SLP service providers and our consumers. Throughout this process TSHA's legislative team has made every effort to serve as a unified voice representing our members who work in a variety of settings. During the legislative session, we have shared up-to-the-minute information with our members through the Capitol Watch and other publications, social media, and face-to-face meetings.

As in several previous legislative sessions, TSHA's legislative team prioritized student loan repayment for SLPs and audiologists working in the public schools as a means of addressing critical staffing shortages. TSHA's legislative team secured sponsors for our student loan repayment bill. **Rep. Ryan Guillen** sponsored HB 1209, and **Sen. Judith Zaffirini** sponsored SB 1438. TSHA members, including **Bess Taylor, Keri Gonzalez, and Sherry Sancibrian** among others, served as resources to help Rep. Guillen and Sen. Zaffirini understand the severity and impact of staffing shortages and the resulting need for such a bill. The bills asked that our student loan repayment fund, administered through the Higher Education Coordinating Board, be allowed to accept state funds. The bills further asked that all monies collected through licensure fees over and above administrative costs be directed to our student loan repayment fund (approximately \$750,000 in recent years). Sen. Zaffirini's bill received a hearing, and compelling testimony was provided by **Gina Glover, Joy Kelly, Cherry Wright, and Sherry Sancibrian**; however, the bill was left pending and was not brought to the floor for a vote. Larry Higdon and Mark Hanna then made several efforts to attach our bill to other student loan repayment bills, one for mental health professionals sponsored by Sen. Schwertner and one for math and science teachers sponsored by Sen. Seliger. Neither senator allowed us to attach our bill. In spite of every effort on the part of our legislative team, we were unable to move forward with student loan repayment this session.

GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

Rolando “RJ” Vasquez and Natalya Rich, Co-Chairs

Rolando “RJ” Vasquez and **Natalya Rich** served as co-chairs of the Grassroots Development Task Force. Their efforts culminated in sharing TSHA’s legislative priorities and activities with visitors at the PAC/Grassroots Development booth at the 2015 Convention. RJ and Natalya recruited and trained volunteers for the booth. They developed flyers that briefed booth visitors on TSHA’s legislative activities. They also designed and purchased a unique giveaway. This giveaway was given to booth visitors with the intent of enticing other Convention attendees to visit the booth to learn about TSHA’s legislative priorities and accomplishments. Booth visitors were asked to provide their contact information. Members who live in key districts (those whose legislators were on the Sunset Commission or who were in a position to affect our legislative priorities) were identified, and any members with personal relationships with legislators were tracked. This information was used as needed to help TSHA meet our legislative priorities.

CAPITOL VISIT DAY COMMITTEE

Sheryl Berg, Chair

Sheryl Berg chaired the Capitol Visit Day Committee, with help from **Allyson Womack**. Sheryl planned the event, which was held on February 20, at the State Capitol. She coordinated publicizing the event and planned and carried out all the details, including providing legislators with a small gift (warm cookies) and advance notice of our visit. She developed talking points and “leave-behinds” for TSHA members who participated in Capitol Visit Day and developed a University Challenge with a trophy given to the university with the greatest percentage of students in attendance. Sheryl presented the trophy to the University of Houston at Convention.



STUDENT LEGISLATIVELY ACTIVE COMMITTEE

Danielle Utianski and Sarah Welch, Co-Chairs

Danielle Utianski and **Sarah Welch**, co-chairs of the Student Legislatively Active Committee (SLAC), developed and maintained a communication network of students from all of the university programs across the state, sharing important legislative and regulatory information with them throughout the year. Danielle and Sarah held a SLAC event at Convention, sharing information with attendees from university programs. They arranged the event and planned and provided a presentation for students in attendance.

REGIONAL ASSOCIATION TASK FORCE

Gilda Lopez, Chair

Regional Association Task Force Chair **Gilda Lopez** arranged for ethics and legislative update presentations at regional associations throughout the year. **Lori Colletti** completed regional association presentations in El Paso, San Antonio, Houston, Amarillo, and Lubbock. Regional association presentations provided an opportunity to share the latest information about TSHA’s legislative priorities and activities and also served as a means of gathering member input.

CONSUMER ADVOCACY NETWORK

Lani Popp, Chair

Consumer Advocacy Network Chair **Lani Popp** developed and maintained a list of consumers willing to testify on behalf of our professions at legislative and/or regulatory hearings.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT COMMITTEE

Jennifer Cole, Chair

Medicaid Reimbursement Committee Chair **Jennifer Cole** kept abreast of Medicaid reimbursement changes and attended several legislative and HHSC meetings. She coordinated with legislative representatives from other professional groups.

THIRD-PARTY REIMBURSEMENT TASK FORCE

Anne Bramlett, Chair

Third-Party Reimbursement Task Force Chair **Anne Bramlett** monitored trends and changes in third-party reimbursement in Texas. She developed relationships with State Insurance Commissioner **David Mattax** as well as with key legislators, and she positioned TSHA to serve as a resource on issues related to third-party reimbursement. Anne voiced a concern that the legislature needed to develop a definition of “habilitation” for use in third-party billing.



HEALTHCARE REFORM TASK FORCE

Melissa Sweeney and Love Johnson, Co-Chairs

Melissa Sweeney and **Love Johnson** served as co-chairs of the Healthcare Reform Task Force. They worked with Shannon Butkus to learn about changes in healthcare delivery and its impact on our professions, and they worked to share the information they gathered. Melissa and Love coordinated with members of the Medical Task Force under the Professional Services VP to participate in a medical issues forum at Convention.

SOCIAL MEDIA TASK FORCE

Adam Torres and Lynnette Torres, Co-Chairs

Adam Torres and **Lynnette Torres** served as co-chairs of the newly formed Social Media Task Force. They coordinated with Lori Colletti to share legislative news through social media, primarily by posting breaking news on TSHA’s Facebook page. At Convention, they provided booth visitors with information about TSHA’s Facebook page and encouraged visitors to “like” our page. In advance of the legislative session, they posted one “plank” of TSHA’s legislative platform each week. Throughout the legislative session, they kept members updated through social media.

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT DEVELOPMENT FUND

Allison Mitcham and Rebecca Nardelli, Co-Chairs

Allison Mitcham and **Rebecca Nardelli** co-chaired the Student Loan Repayment Development Fund. They worked to develop additional sources of funds for student loan repayment. Allison and Rebecca developed a database of foundations and other possible funding sources and applied for funds through several foundations. They publicized the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation (TSHF) fund, established through the efforts of **Sherry Sancibrian**, which accepts tax-free donations for student loan repayment. Several donations to that fund have been received.



The Higher Education Coordinating Board accepted TSHA’s commitment of \$300,000 toward student loan repayment, accepted applications, and selected and notified fund recipients, including 50 SLPs and two doctoral-level university faculty members. Those funds were disbursed this spring



(\$6,000 to each public school SLP and \$9,000 to each doctoral-level university faculty member).

Lori Colletti reviewed the legislative information on TSHA's website and worked with **Peggy Kipping** to ensure that all legislative information was current and accurate. Peggy posted all issues of the Capitol Watch on the website as soon as they were sent out to members. Shannon and Lori provided information that appeared in other publications, including TSHA FLASH and the Communicologist. In addition, the legislative team responded to countless specific inquiries from members regarding legislative activities.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)

Bobbie Kay Turkett, Chair

TSHA Political Action Committee (PAC) Chair **Bobbie Kay Turkett** led a very active group this year. Bobbie Kay also served as TSHA PAC treasurer. She spent many hours working with the State Office to get TSHA PAC finances in order. TSHA funds are now in one account, fees charged in error have been reimbursed, and Ethics Commission reports were filed quarterly. TSHA PAC board members, including **Corrie Cavada, Victoria Parker, Max Pell, Debby Kerner, Suzanne Crow, Suzanne Oglesby, Heather Fuller-Jones, Keri Gonzalez, Alisa Woods, Tsambika Bakiris, Allyson Womack, and RJ Vasquez** (student representative), along with Larry Higdon, Mark Hanna, Shannon Butkus, and Lori Colletti, raised funds that were used to support legislators and candidates who have been supportive or who are in a position to support TSHA's legislative interests. Prior to the legislative session, members of the PAC board and other TSHA members who are constituents of key legislators attended fundraisers to distribute PAC funds. TSHA PAC board members developed fundraising strategies, including efforts at Convention. Of note, the TSHA PAC board arranged for members to be able to donate to PAC when they renewed their membership or registered for Convention. In addition, PAC board members planned and carried out the \$200 Club event at Convention to recognize TSHA members who have donated \$200 or more to TSHA PAC.

TSHA LEGISLATIVE TEAM

Larry Higdon and Mark Hanna

Larry Higdon and Mark Hanna put in countless hours to help meet our legislative goals during the 84th session of the Texas Legislature. This was a challenging legislative session, but they were still able to meet some of our legislative goals. As soon as the legislative session ended on June 1, they began preparing for the 85th legislative session, set to begin in January 2017.

ROBYN MARTIN ★ VICE PRESIDENT FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

QUARTERLY REPORT

- Post-Convention/Pre-Convention meeting occurred in Fort Worth the weekend of April 18 at the Omni
- 2016 Convention will have sessions in the Omni and at the Convention Center
- 2016 Convention in Fort Worth
 - Dates: March 10-12
 - Theme: Celebrating 60 Years
- Transitions were just made between co-chairs. Each co-chair volunteers for two years.

- Convention registration numbers:
 - Total registered attendees (excluding exhibitors):
 - 2010 (Fort Worth): 4,105
 - 2011 (Houston): 3,937
 - 2012 (San Antonio): 3,885
 - 2013 (Dallas): 4,070
 - 2014 (Houston): 4,216
 - 2015 (San Antonio): 4,249
- Each of the committees submits an extensive report from Convention. The following is a summary from each area.

CONVENTION COUNCILOR

Lauren Mathews

- Helped with planning leading up to Convention and then helped run Convention
- With State Office, coordinated local arrangements for major speakers while at Convention
- Participated in conference calls and emails to help problem-solve with Convention issues

CE COUNCILOR/ASHA CE APPROVALS FOR TSHA

Tori Gustafson

- Continues to review and process requests for ASHA continuing education (CE) credits
- In contact with the membership through telephone calls and email to answer any questions pertaining to ASHA requirements
- Participated in conference calls and emails to help problem-solve with the CE system

CONVENTION PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Erin Hengst (outgoing), Brittany Hall (current), Angela Kennedy (incoming)

- Committee of eight program strand chairs
- Total number of sessions: 173
- Total number of cancellations: 9
- Total number of closed sessions: 13
- Short courses:
 - No short courses cancelled before Convention
 - Six short courses were offered
 - One course had 15 attendees, two had 30 attendees, two had 34 attendees, and one had 43 attendees

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Kristi Kelley (outgoing), Aracely Perez (current), Lesa Coker (incoming)

- Committee of five—hospitality, philanthropy, social
- Purchased gifts for the EB and keynote speaker
 - Helped with the chocoholic break
 - Organized the hospitality booth with volunteers
 - Collected donated school supplies for the Boys and Girls Club

EXHIBITS COMMITTEE

Leigh Ann Reel (outgoing), Tara Blanco (current), Karen Hennington (incoming)

- Total booths sold:

2010 (Fort Worth): 213
2011 (Houston): 202
2012 (San Antonio): 202
2013 (Dallas): 188
2014 (Houston): 191
2015 (San Antonio): 200

- Exhibitors were happy with the morning, lunch, and afternoon breaks being free of programming and felt it increased exhibit hall traffic.
- The exhibit hall opened right before the keynote address Thursday morning and was open fewer hours Saturday morning. Feedback from exhibitors was mixed regarding these aspects of the exhibit hall schedule.
- TSHopoly, the new exhibit hall game, was well-received by attendees and exhibitors. The simple requirements and paper-based format seemed to work well (high attendee participation).
- The first Exhibitor Advisory Committee meeting was held Saturday morning at Convention. Exhibitor committee members provided valuable feedback on scheduling, registration, and other key issues.
- On the exhibitor evaluation form, the vast majority of exhibitors indicated that in 2016 they would prefer to have snacks/drinks in the exhibitor lounge throughout Convention, instead of having the exhibitor breakfast Saturday morning.

JOB PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

Alyssa Melson (outgoing), Janabeth Spradling (current), Melinda Malone (incoming)

2013 (Dallas): 55 employers, 294 applicants, 800 total scheduled interviews
2014 (Houston): 43 employers, 260 applicants, 538 total scheduled interviews
2015 (San Antonio): 55 employers, 305 applicants, 863 total scheduled interviews

- Three computers were used for scheduling.
- Two connected booths were used for employer and applicant check-in.

VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Karla Cox

- Total number of volunteers: 207
 - Professional volunteers: 36, including committee chairs and EB members
 - Student volunteers: 171 (153 last year)
 - 14 participating universities: Abilene Christian University, Baylor University, Our Lady of the Lake University, Texas A&M University-International, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Texas Christian University, Texas State University, Texas Tech University, Texas Woman's University, University of Houston, University of North Texas, University of Texas-Dallas, University of Texas-Pan American, West Texas A&M University
- All volunteers who checked in at the volunteer booth received a Shoppe TSHA coupon and a university ribbon.
- A competition was held among universities. The university with the highest number of student volunteer hours won a pizza party to be served by an EB member at their next NSSLHA meeting. Our Lady of the Lake won with 50 volunteer hours.

REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

Sarah Smith and Stacie Neffendorf (outgoing)

- They helped with the registration process.

- Since this process is now mainstreamed with the State Office, we are no longer going to have volunteers in charge of registration.

SPIRIT DAY COMMITTEE

Becca Kelley (outgoing), Sydney Perricone (current), Sydney Kavanaugh (current), Mary Pat Reed (incoming)

- Had three committee members who coordinated the Praxis Bowl and one committee member for the tailgating games
- Spirit Day replaced what was previously called University Day, and meet-and-greet and tailgating games were separated and moved into the exhibit hall.
- 16 universities had tables during University Day, plus a PAC table
- 14 schools participated in the Praxis Bowl. Stephen F. Austin University won!
- All three sections of the ballroom were used this year for the Praxis Bowl.



SHOPPE TSHA COMMITTEE

Noemi Pena (outgoing), Alyssa Melson (current), Erin Hengst (incoming)

- Very successful year in that things flowed smoothly during entire Convention
- We are looking forward to a great Shoppe TSHA year in Fort Worth for the 60th Annual Convention!

CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Becky Gonzalez, Chair

- Three scholarships were awarded this year at \$1,000 each.
- Each recipient wrote an article about their experience in the *Communicologist*.

CONVENTION CE COMMITTEE

Karen King, Chair

- Prior to Convention, the online system was reviewed and adjustments made so that all data was accurately reported and easy to use.
- Codes were assigned to each session indicating time, length, and day of session that could be used to tally Convention CE hours if the electronic system failed.
- The new online reporting CE system appeared to be easily managed by the 3,734 TSHA Convention participants who successfully used the new online CE reporting system to report hours earned for sessions attended.
- TSHA CE processor **Jillian Blair** assisted at the CE desk and provided immediate feedback to TSHA participants who had concerns about their CE hours and the TSHA CE registry.
- Three other volunteers assisted at the CE desk to ensure that Convention participants could speak to someone knowledgeable about the CE process.

TSHA CE APPROVALS

Margaret McAughan (Speech CE), Erin Schafer (Audiology CE)

- Continue to review and approve continuing education program requests for TSHA CE hours
- After reviewing the information, they continue to determine if the program meets the criteria for TSHA CE hours and then submit the approval to CE Processor **Jillian Blair** to complete the process.
- Margaret trained **Laura Neal**, and she will approve applications along with Margaret.

CE PROCESSOR

Jillian Blair

- Continues to work directly with Wyoming and Courtesy regarding all of the problems associated with the website and the TSHA CE registry

KATHY CLAPSADDLE ★ VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Rebecca Linke joined the Research and Development Team as the Vice President-Elect in July 2014. She will take over leadership of the team in July 2015.

CONTINUATION OF GUIDELINES (COG) COMMITTEE

Tiffany Barker and Tanya Benson, Co-Chairs

The Continuation of Guidelines (COG) Committee, co-chaired by **Tiffany Barker** and **Tanya Benson**, are completing final editing of the Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CLD) Language Eligibility Guidelines and plan to record the guidelines training webinar in Fall 2015. The existing Eligibility Guideline training webinars were also moved from the Education Service Center websites to the eLearning page of the new TSHA website.

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Peggy Kipping, Chair

Peggy Kipping, the chair of the Website Committee, worked with the EB and the Past Vice Presidents' Village to determine needed updates to the content on the new website.

ELEARNING TASK FORCE

Kellie Cullum, Chair

Kellie Cullum, chair of the eLearning Task Force, has been working with the Vice President for Professional Services to produce two additional interactive online courses for the SLP-Assistants Guide series, while the first four SLP-Assistant Modules were moved to the eLearning page of the TSHA website. Additionally, the task force has worked to get the updated TSHA Online Ethics Course ready for publication, and it should be live by late summer 2015. Further, a two-year plan was developed to expand the eLearning offerings provided by TSHA.

ACTION RESEARCH TASK FORCE

Erika Armstrong and Laura Green, Co-Chairs

Erika Armstrong and **Laura Green**, co-chairs of the Action Research Task Force, successfully presented the Partners in Action Research program at the ASHA Convention 2014. The task force is rethinking its goal and considering a focus on evidence-based practice in 2015-2016. TSHA had a number of successful assistive technology presentations at the TSHA 2015 Convention, including a day of sessions by **Cathy Binger**, a major speaker, and one by **Mayra Perez**, chair of the Assistive Technology Task Force.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

Lauren Mathews, Chair

The Leadership Development Task Force, which is chaired by **Lauren Mathews**, paired with TSHF to put on the Oscar Mauzy Leadership Conference at Convention and received rave reviews. They also developed a two-year plan for developing future leaders for TSHA. The Leadership Development Program will begin at the Executive Council meeting in September 2015.

SOCIAL MEDIA TASK FORCE

Becca Kelley, Chair

Finally, the Social Media Task Force, chaired by **Becca Kelley**, continued to expand use of the TSHA Facebook page, added a TSHA Twitter account, and worked on processes and procedures for existing and new social media outlets for TSHA.

MICHELLE MENDIETTA ★ VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MARKETING

COUNCILORS

Olivia Brown (Membership and Public Awareness) and Corrie Cavada (Regional and University Affairs)

Councilor for Membership and Public Awareness **Olivia Brown** and Councilor for Regional and University Affairs **Corrie Cavada** assisted with the ongoing activities of the committees and task forces. They ensured that our team met important goals throughout the year that continue to align with TSHA's strategic plan.



UNIVERSITY VISITS COMMITTEE

Melissa Liska Chair

University Visits Chair **Melissa Liska** assisted in coordinating visits throughout the state to promote student membership and involvement.

PUBLIC INFORMATION/CAREER AWARENESS DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

Rossanna Portley and Max Pell, Co-Chairs

Public Information/Career Awareness Distribution Committee Co-Chairs **Rossanna Portley** and **Max Pell** teamed together to remind members of the tools available under member benefits. The Public Information Exhibit (PIE) was reconstructed this year. Both Rossanna and Max assisted with redesigning the Career Awareness Brochure, which is still under construction.

TEXAS REGIONAL ASSOCIATION COALITION (TRAC)

Suzanne Crow, Chair

Texas Regional Association Coalition (TRAC) Chair **Suzanne Crow** worked to tie the various regional associations together so they could help to support and encourage each other through the common connection of TSHA. The annual TRAC meeting was held during Convention this year.

REGIONAL SEMINAR GRANTS COMMITTEE

Gloria Macias-DeFrance, Chair

Regional Seminar Grants Chair **Gloria Macias-DeFrance** led a committee in reviewing grant applications earlier this year. Her committee awarded eight \$500 grants, and these awards were presented during Convention.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Norma Reyes, Chair

Membership Committee Chair **Norma Reyes** and the State Office have been working to ensure that TSHA remains strong and we continue to increase our membership. A membership campaign

was completed in fall 2014 as well as a non-member campaign that was launched at the end of January 2015. We are happy to announce an increase in membership this year over the last by approximately 200 more members.

MAY IS BETTER HEARING AND SPEECH MONTH COMMITTEE



Alisa Woods, Chair

Alisa Woods completed her first year as the May Is Better Hearing and Speech Month (MBHSM) Chair. She continued a photo contest for TSHA members to enter during the month of May, during which three Amazon gift cards were awarded. Norma Reyes was elected as Vice President for Public Information and Marketing, and her term begins July 1.

MARGARITA LIMON-ORDONEZ ★ VICE PRESIDENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES COUNCILORS

Lisa Carver and Pamela Laing

- Held monthly phone conference meetings with councilors to coordinate committee activities
- Met with chairs under the Professional Services VP to review strategic plan, discuss goals and objectives for the upcoming year, work on the budget, and brainstorm ideas for membership
- Presentation between members of the Business Management Committee, Medical Committee, and individuals who are part of the VP of Social and Governmental Policy
- Worked a booth at Convention to showcase VP of Professional Services. Offered an opportunity for members to meet chairs from committees and make connections
- Responded to questions from members

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY (CLD) COMMITTEE

Raul Prezas and Brittney Goodman, Co-Chairs

- Continue to write articles for the CLD Corner in the *Communicologist*
- Continue work on voice-over PowerPoint to coordinate with the university programs
- Reviewing/editing drafted guidelines for bilingual speech-language pathologists and have reviewed the requirements/guidelines from other states and ASHA
- Reviewed website and in the process of establishing organization for information on website
- Seeking approval from TSHA to assist in an underprivileged program focusing on CLD populations in need on behalf of TSHA

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY JOINT COMMITTEE (PSAJC)

Cherry Wright, Chair

Committee met in March and provided updates on priority projects:

- Developing materials to support "Implementation of Telepractice in Schools"
 - Standard protocol
 - Forms for documentation
 - Training webinar(s) for SLPs and facilitators
- Developing additional webinars for the "Special Education Directors' Series" that provide

consistent information regarding best practices

- Role of SLPs in literacy (reading and writing); more than speech and language
- Quality supervision of SLP-Assistants
- Researching availability of materials for developing supervisors of SLP-Assistants
- Developing materials to support a “Workload Approach for Caseload Standards” with talking points for Directors of Special Education for justification
- Completing time-limited surveys of focused topics to support legislative efforts
- Collaborating to address issues and legislation of mutual interest and benefit to the organizations and professions
 - Funding of the loan repayment program
 - Reduction of paperwork



UNIVERSITY ISSUES COMMITTEE

Melissa Bruce, Chair

- Contacted CLD Committee to meet regarding collaboration of CLD infusion into university PowerPoint/webinar developed by CLD Committee
- Progressing on establishing a community page on the TSHA website where Texas universities may share and access clinical competency modules addressing low incidence disorders (e.g., voice, aural rehabilitation, and fluency)
- Developed template and guidelines for competency modules

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Lisa Milliken, Chair

- Chair accepted position to lead this committee in March 2015
- Developed brochure and information about this committee to distribute at the TSHA 2015 Convention
- Recruited/selected initial committee members to serve for the upcoming year and to best work together to meet the set objectives
- Resources will be developed and shared with members to answer their questions. These resources may include but not be limited to:
 - Article(s) in *Communicologist* (Goal date: October 2015)
 - Frequently asked questions distributed via email and/or through email blasts or *Communicologist* (Goal date: January 2016)
 - Resources and/or courses to be shared/taught at Convention (completed by February 1, 2016)

MEDICAL COMMITTEE

Kristi Kelley, Chair

- Panel: Held first annual medical forum. Comment cards from the Convention yielded great feedback, but we know there is always room for growth. For example, simply adding a pediatric focus will garner more attention and clinicians.
- Growth: With the addition of a pediatric focus, a listserv, and improved organization, growth is likely.
- *Communicologist*: Submitted a wrap-up last year to educate TSHA members

PUBLIC SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Deborah Balfanz and Denise Minton, Co-Chairs

- Committee went through each document on the website and discussed corrections, additions, and deletions that needed to be made. Completed Excel spreadsheet with detailed information

TELEPRACTICE COMMITTEE

Rosanne Joseph, Chair

- Continuing work on a reference guide for TSHA members concerning ethical standards, rules, and laws specific to telehealth practices utilized by SLPs and audiologists in the state of Texas
 - Developing references/rules for State Board of Examiners regarding telehealth
 - Developed narrated PowerPoint that provides an overview of the logistics of utilizing telecommunication. Module 1 completed. Working with State Office to develop pre-/post-test for posting on website
 - Developing and creating five more modules regarding telepractice
 - Developing glossary of terms specific to telepractice

SLP-ASSISTANTS/SLP-SUPERVISORS COMMITTEE

Anna Garcia and Meagan Wilson, Co-Chairs

This was a start-up year for this committee in 2014-2015. We have goals to:

- Explore possibility of holding a panel-type discussion at TSHA Convention for SLP supervisors and assistants to get a true idea of what members need or would like to see
 - Update section on the TSHA website
 - Social Media: Consider the possibility of Facebook page for SLP-A supervisors/SLP-As
 - Update FAQs for SLP-Assistants and SLP supervisors (ethical issues, limitations of roles, Medicaid)
 - Educate related professionals, supervisors, directors, board members about roles, responsibilities, and limitations of SLPs and SLP-Assistants (TCASE PowerPoint)
 - Educate related professionals, supervisors, directors, and board members about educational differences, licensing, and competencies (TCASE PowerPoint)
 - Determine areas of need for support through questionnaires for existing SLP-Assistants and inexperienced SLP-Assistants

CANDACE BOURLAND HICKS ★

VICE PRESIDENT FOR AUDIOLOGY

AUDIOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Kathleen Everson and George Whitaker, Co-Chairs

- Finalized the members of the Audiology Advisory Committee. In April, one member withdrew due to family reasons. The current committee consists of:

Kathleen Everson, co-chair (educational audiologist from Fort Worth)

George Whitaker, co-chair (clinical audiologist at Scott & White)

Brenda Cross (chair of UG/SLP program, West Texas A&M, Canyon)

Amanda Rodriguez (PhD student, Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Lubbock)

Student members **Katie Sanders** (UNT) and **Tyler Hawthorne** (UT Austin)

- The members of the Audiology Advisory Committee had a conference call on October 29, 2014. The committee discussed goals and actions. The committee decided to first focus on improving the audiology presence on the TSHA website with the three most important sections to begin work being Policy/Advocacy, Practice Resources, and Students. The committee also discussed increasing audiology membership in TSHA and increasing member benefits of TSHA.

- Met with subset of members at the TSHA 2015 Convention in March. Discussed having a focus of working with the VP of Educational and Scientific Affairs and committees/chairs under this VP to increase audiology presence at the TSHA 2016 Convention. Also discussed having sessions related to students, both audiology students (e.g., grand rounds, clinical cases, how to interview, how to write a resume) and undergraduates (e.g., what is audiology, how do you apply to audiology programs, etc.).

- Committee and the VP had its first face-to-face meeting on May 30, 2015. The committee worked through the website, making recommendations for changes/additions. Some sections will need information developed; those will be divided between committee members to complete. Discussed individuals to invite to submit call-for-papers (CFP) for the 2016 Convention. Committee members took on the responsibility of contacting individuals to invite them to submit a CFP. Discussed the student information to work on for the 2016 Convention.

VICE PRESIDENT ACTIVITIES

- I completed a spreadsheet of work settings for licensed audiologists in Texas and emailed this to the VP of Marketing to be used in the future for targeted membership campaigns toward increasing audiology membership in TSHA.

- Made one university NSSLHA visit to Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Given feedback at the last EB/EC meeting, I asked recent graduates/TSHA members to assist with the presentation. **Tara Blanco**, MS, CCC-SLP, and **Amanda Rodriguez**, AuD, CCC-A, developed a skit that was presented to the students.

- At the national convention of ASHA, I talked with the audiology professional practices representatives. They agreed to a phone conference call to discuss how TSHA can work with ASHA to increase the audiology presence in the state. Had a conference call with **Anne Oyler**, Associate Director of Audiology Professional Practices for ASHA, and **Janet Deppe**, the state liaison to TSHA. The TSHA representatives included:

Candace Bourland Hicks, VP of Audiology

Kathleen Everson, co-chair of Audiology Advisory Committee

Tori Gustafson, CE counselor; previously VP for Educational and Scientific Affairs

- I helped with recruiting a candidate for the VP of Audiology position
- I nominated two individuals for the Oscar Mauzy Conference from my committee
- I have reviewed audiology-related information before the online *Communicologist* is published

SHERRY SANCIBRIAN ★ TEXAS SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING FOUNDATION

Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation (TSHF) board member **Ann Higdon** worked with co-chair **Donise Pearson** to develop the 2015 Oscar Mauzy Leadership Conference, titled "Leading with Style." The conference was held March 21, in conjunction with the TSHA 2015 convention. The conference included a panel of Foundation Fellows (**Jennifer Watson**, **Cherry Wright**, **Dee Kirby**, **Shannon Butkus**, **Denise Barringer**, **Margarita Limon-Ordonez**) who talked about leading in different professional organizations (ASHA, TSHA, TSHF) and practice sites (private practice, medical settings, schools). Roundtable discussions led by **Judy Rudebusch**, **Lauren Mathews**, **Martha McGlothlin**, and **Bess Simon Taylor** covered topics such as having difficult conversations, planning successful meetings, serving as a leader in TSHA, and finding your leadership style. For the 2014-2015 year, the Foundation board added two new members: **Lynn Flahive** and **Donise Pearson**. The annual fund report letter and earnings report was mailed in late November to all fund sponsors. In the annual letter, the Foundation was proud to report that all funds had increased to the target level of \$20,000, one new research grant (the Elisabeth Wiig Doctoral Student Research Fund) was established, and efforts were underway to solicit additional funds. At the annual Awards Luncheon held on the Friday of the TSHA Convention, the Foundation presented 19 scholarships, two service awards, and six research grants, totaling more than \$27,000. The silent auction and raffle also earned revenue that will be used to cover some of the Foundation's operational costs. ★