



Rebuilding communication. Transforming lives.

# ACC Connection

Volume 14 Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2011

## Kicking off our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Year: Rebuilding Communication and Transforming Lives

**By Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D.**  
*President and Founder,  
Aphasia Center of California*

The Aphasia Center of California has just begun celebrating our 15 year anniversary of providing valuable services to people impacted by aphasia. You may notice that we have a fresh new look—we hope you like it! We are excited about the Aphasia Center newsletter’s updated design that more clearly communicates the organization’s main goals: rebuilding communication and transforming lives.

The Aphasia Center has positively impacted hundreds of lives over the past 15 years, but I want to share with you one recent story that illustrates what we do and why we do it. Stan, once an outgoing man, lost his job as a substitute teacher and turned to drugs. Then he had a massive stroke. At the age of 55, he

found himself homeless and unable to communicate. He received limited speech therapy at the county hospital, but was left with significant communication difficulties. Stan was angry—he felt very isolated by his aphasia. He had managed to get clean and sober after his stroke and was motivated to improve his communication skills. But without health insurance, he wasn’t eligible for additional speech therapy.

When I first met Stan, he was living independently in subsidized housing and very eager to attend our programs. He enrolled in a commu-

*“The secret of getting ahead is getting started.”*

--Mark Twain

nication treatment group just three months ago. Almost immediately, Stan’s mood changed. During the first group session, he met six other people with aphasia and learned, in those first 90 minutes, that he was no longer alone. From that day forward, we have been witness to an amazing transformation: Stan’s anger is gone and his communication skills are improving every week.

When I talked to Stan last week, he said to me, “I’m happy!” These two small words speak volumes about the importance of the Aphasia Center of California.

### **Inside:**

- Thanks to Our Donors . page 2
- ACC News ..... page 3
- Walk to Talk Donors ... page 4
- Walk to Talk ..... page 5



*Smiles from members of one of the ACC’s Communication Treatment Groups*

**Our Mission Statement:** *The mission of the Aphasia Center of California is to enhance communication skills, quality of life, and overall well-being for all those affected by aphasia.*

# Thank You to Our Generous Donors

## January 2011–June 2011

*If we have made any errors in this listing, please accept our apologies and contact us at (510) 336-0112.*

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*Continued on page 4*

## Fifteen Years of Rebuilding Communication and Transforming Lives

We cannot achieve anything at the Aphasia Center without your support. Thank you so much for the community that you have helped to create and your generosity in ways large and small over the past 15 years. Working together, just think how many lives we can transform over the NEXT 15 years!

# Aphasia Center News



*Enid Meyer and Sid Dommès set up refreshments at the Walk to Talk*

## Aphasia Internet Clinic Receives Cisco Funding

For the second year in a row, we have received a highly competitive grant from Cisco Systems Foundation to expand our innovative Aphasia Internet Clinic. This clinic assists people with aphasia in communicating with their healthcare providers. A big thank you to Cisco Systems Foundation for helping us increase access to healthcare for people living with aphasia!

## We Share our Work Around the World

Aphasia Center of California's staff members are frequently invited to provide training to speech-language pathologists throughout the world. This past year we gave talks about our programs to speech-language pathologists in California and Pennsylvania. We have also written an invited chapter and several peer-

reviewed journal articles about various aspects of aphasia group treatment. We may be based in California, but our philosophy and clinical techniques continue to make a difference for people with aphasia around the world! -

## Help ACC When Shopping at Lucky, FoodMaxx or Savemart!

Lucky, FoodMaxx, and Savemart will donate money to the Aphasia Center of California every time you shop! Just call the Aphasia Center and ask us to mail you a Shares Program card. The program is super simple, doesn't cost a thing, and you don't need to give any personal information. Each time you buy groceries, you just hand your Shares Program card to the clerk, and Lucky, FoodMaxx and Savemart will automatically donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the ACC, at no cost to you. So please

call us today to get your free Shares Program card and start helping the ACC every time you buy groceries! To get your Shares Program card, please call us at 510-336-0112.

## Credit Card

### Donations Made Easy

Did you know that you can make a donation with your credit card to the Aphasia Center? It's easy to do! Just go to our website at [www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org) and click on the Network for Good icon. You can make a one-time donation or monthly, quarterly, or annual recurring donations. All gifts help us make a dramatic difference in the lives of those affected by aphasia.

## Great News!

### The ACC Accepts Vehicle Donations

#### *Save the Headache and Donate Your Vehicle to Us*

The Aphasia Center of California has teamed up with Donate For Charity, a company that specializes in processing vehicle donations for nonprofit organizations. Donate For Charity arranges for vehicle pickup, handles all the DMV issues, sells the vehicle at auction, and distributes the net proceeds to Aphasia Center of California. So if it's time to replace an older car, or if you have a boat and trailer that are just taking up space in the garage, consider making a donation that is tax deductible. Simply call Donate For Charity toll-free at (866) 392-4483. We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity!

## Walk to Talk 2011 Donors

### A big thank you to all of our Walk to Talk donors!

(Space limitations allow us to list donors who made contributions of \$50 or more.)

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*Continued on page 6*

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## Record Attendance at 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk to Talk



*The 2011 Walk to Talk Participants at Lake Merritt*

“The more, the merrier” expression held true on June 25<sup>th</sup> when we had the biggest attendance yet at our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual “Walk to Talk” event! More than 135 participants and supporters joined The Aphasia Center of California to raise awareness and funds of more than \$25,000 for our valuable programs and services. It was a beautiful sunny day and everyone had a great time walking around Lake Merritt and enjoying the games and entertainment at the Senior Center. It was truly a family affair!

For the second year in a row, John Jankowski brought in the most donations—he singlehandedly raised more than \$5,000. Jim and Patty Santana were next with more than \$2,500 raised. John, Jim & Patty—you are definitely superstars—thank you! A record number of people

raised more than \$500 for the ACC: Esther Akiba, Anita Cox & Family, Mark Estigoy & Friends, David & Gail Giacomelli, Howard Olson, Mary Jane & Rich Laufenberg, Enid Meyer & Sid Dommies, Pat & George Springer, Dan & Diana Sullivan, Philip Tien, and Bill Wong & Family. Kudos to all of you!!

We also want to thank all who participated—this was another challenging year and everyone did an outstanding job. The money raised will fund a variety of ACC programs for stroke survivors with aphasia. There is not enough space to list the names of everyone who made a contribution, but we truly appreciate each and every gift that was made. Thank you for helping us in our work to rebuild communication and transform the lives of people af-

ected by aphasia.

The Walk to Talk event was fortunate to have wonderful performers who donated their time to entertain us throughout the day. Susan Musicant and Sharon Medairy joined us for the seventh year and started off the morning with country and bluegrass music. Then Howard Zugman performed with his wide selection of show tunes. Thank you Susan, Sharon and Howard—your music made the day truly special!

Throughout the day, people enjoyed viewing the raffle table with handcrafted items created by members and friends. The silent auction provided some fun bidding on items donated from local businesses. Together, they raised more than \$900. Please join us in publicly thanking the companies and individuals that donated services or merchandise.

This walk would not have taken place without the help of numerous event volunteers. Once again, Enid Meyer did a terrific job as event co-coordinator! And a big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time at the “Walk to Talk” to help things run smoothly: Sid Dommies, Vanessa Bigelow, Vicki & Don Welcome, Steve Fry, Tessa Fisher, Brenda Saucer, Joseph Aquino, Betty Bugaj, Maia Olson, Bailey Levis, Carson Miller, Tori Simmons, Patricia Terry Olson, Dan & Diana Sullivan, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, and Esther Akiba.

Everyone’s hard work guaranteed that our 9<sup>th</sup> annual “Walk to Talk” was a terrific event and a great success!



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