
Aphasia Center of California

Volume 11 Issue 1 ♦ Spring 2008

Angela Lilley Joins ACC Staff

‘Life isn’t about how to survive the storm, but how to dance in the rain.’

—*Unknown*

Angela Lilley, M.S., CCC-SLP, joined the Aphasia Center of California’s speech-language pathology staff in October, 2007. I asked Angela to introduce herself by answering some questions about her career and family. We are very fortunate to have Angela become a part of our ACC community!

--Roberta Elman, President & Founder, Aphasia Center of California



Angela Lilley with her daughter Katie, at Katie’s first birthday party, at the ACC

Q: What led you to pursue a career in speech and language pathology and aphasia in particular?

I was originally introduced to the field of speech-language pathology during my undergraduate studies in Speech Communication. After gradu-

ating, I worked in the corporate world for a few years and then decided to change careers and pursue a career in speech-language pathology so that I could work with people and help them improve their communication skills.

Q. Can you tell us a little about how you came to the Aphasia Center?

I was originally introduced to the Aphasia Center in graduate school but didn’t really have a good appreciation of all they do until I actually visited the center on their 5th anniversary. After seeing all of the wonderful things that

they do for people with aphasia, I was inspired and wanted to do the same. At the time I was working full-time at Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in the Outpatient Rehabilitation Department, and I typically referred patients to the Aphasia Center for continued therapy and support. After several years, I finally had the opportunity to work at the ACC. I was off on maternity leave when Roberta emailed about a part-time position at the Center. I was very interested in the op-

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Our Mission statement: *The mission of the Aphasia Center is to encourage and expand communication and psychosocial well being for those with aphasia. We are dedicated to helping families and stroke survivors understand the ramifications of stroke and aphasia on their daily lives and to improve the quality of life for all those affected.*

Angela Lilley Joins ACC Staff

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portunity, so I met with Roberta, observed a few groups and therapy sessions, and decided that it would be a great place to work, especially since I could bring my daughter with me.

Q: Why is the ACC a unique place to work?

The ACC is a unique place to work for many reasons. For one, I've always enjoyed working with groups and that's primarily the type of therapy offered at the ACC. Group therapy is a very functional way to address communication impairments and I think patients get a lot out of it. Group therapy at the ACC provides group members an opportunity to learn strategies and/or techniques that improve

communication from both therapists and their peers while participating in natural conversation. Another reason the ACC is unique is that it provides a place for people with aphasia to come, meet and get to know other people with aphasia. It's a very supportive environment that fosters positive communication experiences in and outside the group. The ACC is also a unique in that it's a place where therapists have the opportunity to continue helping people make gains in communication months and even years after the onset of aphasia. At the Aphasia Center we are able to work on any communication goal rather than being constrained by what insurance companies consider to be reimbursable goals. Also because the ACC is largely

funded by grants and private donations, it is able to provide services to anyone in the community with aphasia regardless of insurance. And finally, the ACC is unique place to work because it allows me to bring my daughter with me, which in turn is helping build trans-generational relationships and communication.

Q: Tell us a little about yourself, both personally and professionally.

I'm a new mom and love it! My husband and I had our first child, Katie, last year and we couldn't be happier. I'm fairly active and enjoy doing just about anything that involves being outside. I enjoy running, mountain biking, tennis, swimming and hiking.

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July-December, 2007

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

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On the Road to Recovery with the Book Connection™



Hank Padgham, Susan Dawkins, Martha Lynch, and Allan Leader

by Martha Lynch, Stroke Survivor and ACC Participant

We are members of the Aphasia Center of California in Oakland. We have all had major strokes that left us with various disabilities. While it would be easy to assume that our respective disabilities are the foremost characteristic we share, that is not the case. The most important attribute that we have in common is that we are all fighters. We see our glass as half-full, not half-empty, and we are determined to get better and fill that glass to the brim.

Dr. Roberta Elman, President & Founder of the Aphasia Center of California, and Ellen Bernstein-Ellis, speech-language pathologist, created the Book Connection™, an aphasia book club, that meets every Wednesday. The Book Connection™

has provided a unique, exciting way to help us achieve our goal of living our lives to the fullest potential.

For each term of the Book Connection™, a new book is chosen. Each week we read one or two chapters of the book and summaries written by the speech-language pathologist. We also respond to short answer and essay type questions each week.

The beauty of all this is that we participate to whatever degree we can. Some people are unable to read text, so they listen to the book on tape. Others have trouble with speaking, so they are given the time to express their opinions, summarize the chapters, and ask questions about the story. If you come to the Book Connection™, you realize how engaging and intelligent the participants are and how much fun we have discussing the book and relating it to our lives.

Here are some personal experiences about the Book Connection™ from members of our group:

Allan Leader had a stroke in 2003 while he was in Hawaii on business for Sara Lee Corporation as Vice President/Director. Leader explains, "After my stroke, I couldn't read words at all. In the Book Connection™ I was able to listen to the book on tape and then discuss it in class." That opened up a new world for him. "Just as *Mma Ramotswe* from the *#1 Ladies Detective Agency* continued solving her cases when everything was against her, we continue improving our skills against amazing odds. In the Book Connection™ we have the opportunity to express our views and respond to each other's comments. The Book Connection™ helps me keep moving forward everyday."

Another example from the Book Connection™ comes from **Susan Dawkins**, who had a stroke in 2001. Dawkins had traveled the world as an international flight attendant for Western Airlines for 18 years. Dawkins remarks, "The Book Connection™ has helped me tremendously. In the beginning, I didn't talk because I was afraid I would stutter. I was afraid to express my thoughts. Now I know that the more I talk or practice speaking, the better I get. I feel my stroke has put me back to kindergarten, and I struggle to improve even if it is in baby steps. Now I can see the great progress I've made and continue to

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The Book Connection

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make in the Book Connection™.”

Hank Padgham, who survived a stroke in 2003, had been a civil engineer for Bechtel Corporation for 18 years and then for CH2M Hill for 24 years. During that time he lived and worked in the US, Brazil, Egypt, Japan, and Puerto Rico. He felt he had turned a corner in the Book Connection™ when he read *Shadow Divers* by Robert Kurson. Padgham states, “This was the first book since my stroke that I could discuss.” This true, compelling story is about a German submarine and the men who were lost off the east coast of the United States at the end of World War II. “I enjoyed reading and talking about the brave divers and how they uncovered the missing submarine. The

book also took us into the minds of ordinary German sailors and showed us what their lives were like at that time. I was caught up in the story, and it pushed me forward to discuss my ideas about what happened.”

Martha Lynch, who had a stroke in 2001, praises the Book Connection™ for the progress she has made. Lynch had been director of English as a Second Language at College of Marin in California. Lynch says, “We read a fascinating, creative story called *Five People You Meet in Heaven* by Mitch Albom,” she said. “I disagreed with the author’s depiction of the father and expressed my opinion in the class discussion. That may sound like a small step, but it was a huge step for me. Since my stroke, it has taken all of my energy and thought processes just to

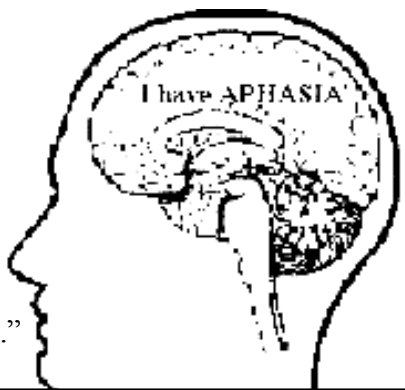
understand the story in a novel and to follow the class discussions. This was the first time since my stroke, and since I’ve begun attending the Book Connection™, that I have been able to disagree with a writer and had the confidence to express my opinion. The Book Connection™ has helped give me the ability to express my opinions and the self-confidence to use that ability.”

As you can see from these stories, we’re determined to succeed. We might not be able to express our thoughts as we once did, but we are fighters and will never give up trying to improve. Thanks to the Aphasia Center of California, the speech-language pathologists, and our classmates, we have been given the remarkable opportunity to enjoy and learn from the Book Connection™.

Aphasia Center News

Aphasia (uh fay' zhuh) n: an impairment of the power to use or comprehend words, usually acquired as a result of a stroke and sometimes from head injury or a brain tumor. More than one million Americans have acquired aphasia.

"I jenti ferbis..."



June: National and California Aphasia Awareness Month

Help the ACC raise awareness of aphasia. Increasing the awareness of aphasia will help us to provide needed services, improve research funding, and reduce the isolation often caused by aphasia. You can help us to raise aphasia awareness by educating your friends and family about aphasia. Join us at our "Walk to Talk" event in June at Lake Merritt. Whenever you can, educate people about "aphasia" and give them the website address of the Aphasia Center of California so they can learn more: www.aphasiacenter.org

Great News! The Aphasia Center Accepts Vehicle Donations

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. You'll avoid the headache of selling a used vehicle, help the Aphasia Center of California fund its ongoing efforts, and receive a tax deduction. When you're ready to donate, or if you have relatives or friends that wish to donate,

simply call Donate For Charity toll-free at (866) 392-4483 or donate online at www.aphasiacenter.org. We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity and help us expand our commitment to improving the quality of life for all those affected by aphasia.

Your Quality Donations Needed

Don't forget the ACC when it comes to donating quality items. All money earned from the ACC's consignment program benefits the speech-language treatment programs at the Center. We are looking for quality items throughout the year that can be sold. All quality furniture, costume and fine jewelry, vintage and new clothing, kitchenware, children's books, and collectibles are greatly appreciated. We cannot accept non-working electrical items, computers, or golf clubs. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the IRS. Please contact Elaine Ivankovich, Program Coordinator, to arrange for drop-off or pick-up at 925-687-9783 or 925-788-6261.

Join our Sixth Annual "Walk to Talk" Raise Funds and Awareness!

What: The Aphasia Center of California's Sixth Annual "Walk to Talk" is a fund-raising event to raise funds for our programs. Our "Walk to Talk" will feature a 1/4 mile and 3 mile untimed walk/run.

When: Saturday, June 28th, 2008. The walk will begin at 10:00am.

Where: Lake Merritt, Oakland. Walk starts at the Downtown Oakland Senior Center at 200 Grand Avenue.

How: Companies and individuals, from walkers with kids to seasoned athletes to people with their dogs on leashes can participate in this event to benefit the Aphasia Center. Help the Aphasia Center by sponsoring an Aphasia Center participant, asking friends and family for donations, or joining us for the walk. Please contact Roberta Elman (510) 336-0112 to receive a walk packet or for more information.

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ACC 2007 Annual Report

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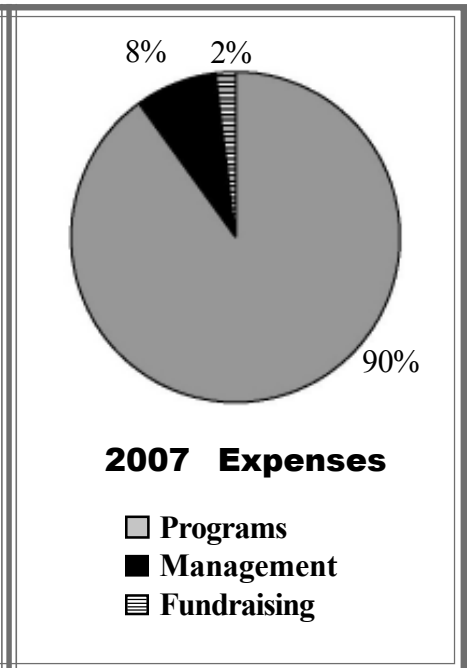
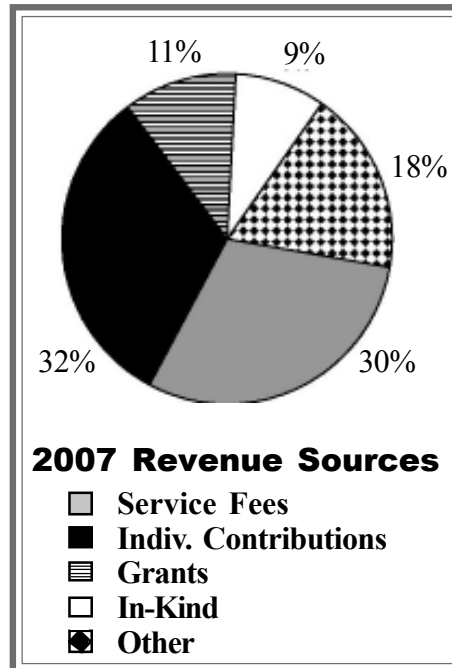
Total Visits: 4617
 Group Communication Treatment
 Visits: 2235
 Individual Speech-Language Treatment Visits: 193
 Reading & Writing Classes: 515
 Club Aphasia: 608
 Fitness & Relaxation Classes: 856
 Educational Stroke Group Series: 210
 Information & Referral (includes phone, mail, and e-mail): 1964
 Web site hits to date: 54,000+

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