



Rebuilding communication. [Transforming lives.](#)

ACC Connection

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“Good Things Come Back to You”

“I’ve not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.”

~Thomas Edison

**By Roberta J Elman, PhD
CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS
President and Founder**

Wanda Crews grew up in Detroit, Michigan. Her parents taught her to work hard and to remember to give back to the community. In high school, one of her classmates, Diana Ross, would go on to a very successful career as a Motown singer.

Wanda had many jobs during her work career including positions at Michigan Bell, the U.S. Postal Service, and answering 911 calls for the Indianapolis Police Department. However, she worked the longest in position as an educational trainer for the IRS - 38 years!

Wanda raised two wonderful children, Jeff and Kim. Over the years, Wanda has lived in Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Besides work, Wanda

enjoyed playing cards and bowling twice a week. Other hobbies included cooking and making crafts such as wreaths, rugs and costume jewelry. She also enjoyed her service to the church as a bible teacher.

In September of 2005, Wanda experienced congestive heart failure that forced her to retire. Just two months later, she sustained a large stroke that caused aphasia. Living in Michigan at the time, Wanda received speech-language therapy from a variety of healthcare facilities. Over time, she became involved in different aphasia support groups. As her language skills improved, she enjoyed becoming an advocate for aphasia and participating in community talks and presentations about the disorder.

We first met Wanda at the Aphasia Center of California in 2017. Her daughter, Kim, had accepted a job in the Bay Area, so the family moved from the Midwest. Wanda started attending a weekly Aphasia Conversation group and fit right in from the very first day!

Soon, Wanda was asking us what else she could do as a volunteer for the



Wanda Crews at the Aphasia Center

ACC. She told me that she thought we should start acknowledging participant birthdays and asked if she could start a “birthday club” for ACC members. And now, thanks to Wanda, everyone attending the Aphasia Center receives a birthday card on his or her birthday!

Wanda is especially proud of her family members, including her grandchildren, Krystalyn, Garrison, and Kaylyn. A Christmas present from her granddaughter recently changed

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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 2019 - July 2019
Please see page 4 for “Walk to Talk” donations

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

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“Good Things Come Back to You”

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Wanda’s life for the better. Through a commercially available DNA test, Wanda learned that she actually has 6 half-siblings. Raised as an only child, not having siblings often annoyed her. With her new found brother and sisters, Wanda now has the opportunity to be the amazing older sister she always knew she could be.

She sums up her philosophy of life this way: “I believe that the more you help someone, the more good things come back to you.” She encourages stroke survivors to not be afraid and go out and do whatever it is they enjoy. Wanda demonstrates that an important way to live successfully with aphasia is by participating in life!

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Aphasia Center News

17th Annual “Walk to Talk”

A record setting 175+ people joined our 17th Annual “Walk to Talk” at Lake Merritt on June 22nd to raise aphasia awareness and funds for the ACC. With the help of a \$10,000 challenge gift from two anonymous donors, we raised more than \$45,000 for aphasia programs and services!!

The “Walk to Talk” was kicked off when two stroke survivors, Mark Estigoy and Regina Tipton, shared their personal experiences about life with aphasia and how the ACC has changed their lives. For the 9th year in a row, John Jankowski brought in the most donations and received special recognition! Plus, we had many people who raised more than \$500 in donations: Azlynda Alim, Fritz Coetzee, Roberta Elman, Nancy & Peter Farber-Szekrenyi, Terry Flanagan, Steve Fry, Roy Grimstad & Joan Fribley, Ron Hausmann & Mary Anne Muirhead, Donna Jones, Mary & Rich Laufenberg, Julie & Vince Lindgren, Eric Liu, Michael Miller & Family, Len & Sylvie Nordson, Alyssa Rome & Family, Jim & Patty Santanna, Myrna & Barry Schwartz, Ralph Soriano, Drew Sperling & Family, Team Rafael Corona, Team Derrick Wong, Philip Tien, Regina & Eric Tipton, Kindri Van Puffelen & Family, and Bill Wong & Mary Lew. To everyone who raised donations, and to all those who made donations, thank you for your generosity and efforts in supporting what we do at the Aphasia Center!

The “Walk to Talk” couldn’t take place without all of our hard working event volunteers, including our wonderful

musicians: Susan Musicant & Sharon Medairy who got the event started; and the “Mostly Marys” band who helped finish the event with a musical high; our extraordinary event co-coordinator, Enid Meyer; and our volunteers on event day: Sue Ewing, Lauren Scheiner, Maggie Feeney, Kristen Wehara, Lyssa Rome & Dave Gilson along with Ben, Noah and Abe, Alta Brink, Myrna Schwartz, Betty Bugaj, Steve Fry, Patty Santanna, Jadine Veluya, Lynsie Erickson, Priscilla Helen, Jessica Moffett, Sarah Millar, Loyrn Avalos, Erika Cortez, Lesley Peng, Don Nelson, Coleana Mount, Maryvi Morales, Virginia Perng, Randy Fong, Steven Perng, Stephen Liu, Carly Miller, Danielle Utianski, Brenda Montoya, and Regina Monteiro. ACC volunteers and donors make everything possible—thank you so much!

Are you on Facebook?

If you’re on Facebook, please consider selecting the Aphasia Center of California as a recipient of Facebook fundraising! Facebook recognizes the ACC as an official non-profit organization. This means that you can raise funds for the ACC and the money raised will be sent directly to us. Consider creating your own ACC fundraiser for a birthday or special anniversary and then invite your Facebook friends to donate. If you have questions, or would like some help when creating your fundraiser, we’d be happy to assist! Call us at 510-336-0112.

Thank You to Our Generous Donors

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Walk to Talk 2019 Donors

A big thank you to all of our “Walk to Talk” donors! It was a record setting event with more than 175 walkers at Lake Merritt on June 22nd. Please be sure to join us in 2020!

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

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Menlo Park Aphasia Groups

The ACC is currently providing a News Forum group and a Communication Group in Silicon Valley (Menlo Park). If you are interested in learning more about the programs at our Menlo Park program site, please call us at 510-336-0112.

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