

SPERO STUTTERING, INC.

Vision, Mission, Primary Activities & Scope



VISION STATEMENT

To help, empower, and advocate for the stuttering community and their families by equipping those who work with people who stutter.

MISSION STATEMENT

To make current resources accessible to people who stutter, their families, and speech-language pathologists desiring more training in the area of stuttering; to provide guidance and incentives for speech-language pathologists to prioritize stuttering as an area of professional growth; and to become a source of current, research-based, and quality training for general speech-language pathologists interested in stuttering.

NAME & LOGO SIGNIFICANCE

Spero means hope in Latin. The Tabono symbolizes unity of purpose, confidence, strength, and determination to reach a destination or goal. The peacock symbolizes awakening, expression, and confidence. Through our work, this is what we hope to inspire!

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

- **Recruitment of practicing speech-language pathologists (SLPs) to obtain more training in the area of fluency disorders** – To garner SLP interest in stuttering such that they obtain more training from current, research-based sources on the assessment and treatment of fluency disorders; to provide guidance, stipends, and incentives for SLP training and hands-on traineeship experiences, with an emphasis on school-based SLPs.
- **Provision of quality training for SLPs** – To equip SLPs to work with people who stutter with increased knowledge and confidence; to develop and facilitate a current, research-based, intensive weekend training program for generalist SLPs in the area of fluency disorders, with a philosophy of treatment that seeks to see people who stutter and their families find connection and resources, discover their authentic voices and self-acceptance, and communicate effectively in their everyday lives.
- **Ally of Stuttering™ Seal** – To award Ally of Stuttering™ seal to SLPs who meet seal requirements; to maintain database of committed allies who have obtained more training and to make it accessible to individuals and families. The seal is intended for SLPs who want to prioritize stuttering as an area of growth post graduate school training.
 - **Seal Requirements:**
 - SLP must hold Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) and state licensure (if state licensure required in SLP's state of residence).
 - Obtain **10** continuing education or professional development hours in the area of fluency disorders from current, research-based source(s).
 - Obtain experiential knowledge and connection with people who stutter by attending a reputable conference, convention, or camp for people who stutter, or participate in regional/local self-help groups or an organized event in the stuttering community.
 - After meeting initial requirements and receiving Ally of Stuttering™ seal, the Ally of Stuttering™ SLP must obtain **5** continuing education or professional development hours yearly to maintain designation.
 - The Ally of Stuttering™ seal carries no cost. It is not a certification but rather a designation that allows the generalist SLP to demonstrate increased interest and training in the area of fluency disorders.
 - The Ally of Stuttering™ seal is not an endorsement of the SLP's competency or quality of services provided. It signifies that the SLP has received current and continued training post graduate school.

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SCOPE OF ALLY OF STUTTERING™ SEAL

Most speech-language pathologists (SLPs) begin their careers as generalists, and their knowledge base and experience treating fluency disorders are often very limited. In fact, even after many years of experience, studies show that stuttering is a low preference disorder among SLPs and that a vast number of SLPs feel inadequate and uncomfortable treating stuttering (Yaruss, Coleman, & Quesal, 2012; Tellis & Barone, 2011; Tellis, Bressler, & Emerick, 2008; Yaruss & Quesal, 2002). Additionally, based on our professional experiences and family accounts of previous therapy, we see that many SLPs are treating stuttering with limited training and without confidence.

The Ally of Stuttering™ seal is a viable solution to this very real gap in practice due to inadequate training and lack of confidence. The seal is an accessible training path for the generalist SLP to learn more about stuttering, people who stutter, and research-based therapy approaches. It recognizes that the SLP holding the seal has a special interest in stuttering and has received intentional training beyond graduate school. The seal also recognizes that the Ally of Stuttering™ SLP is committed to ongoing training and professional development in the area of fluency disorders at regular intervals.

It is important to note that the seal does not endorse or guarantee the quality of services provided by that SLP. It is up to the individual or family seeking treatment to determine if the SLP is a good fit. Since many families go in blind when working with an SLP, we believe there's value in families knowing if their SLP has more training in the area of fluency disorders than the generalist SLP.

In summary, what does the Ally of Stuttering™ designation mean?

The Ally of Stuttering™ designation **IS**:

- An acknowledgment of active and intentional training obtained by the generalist SLP in the area of stuttering.
- An acknowledgment of a commitment to continued training in the area of stuttering.
- An acknowledgment of involvement within the stuttering community via conference(s) and/or camp(s) and/or support group(s) for people who stutter.

The Ally of Stuttering™ designation **IS NOT**:

- A replacement for obtaining specialty certification and does not assure the specialist designation (BCS-F).
- An endorsement of quality of services provided.
- A designation of effective clinical practice.

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Tellis, G., & Barone, N. (2011). Results of a nationwide study: Are clinicians prepared to treat stuttering? *Pennsylvania Speech-Language and Hearing Association (PSHA) Convention*, Pittsburgh, PA.

Tellis, G., Bressler, L., & Emerick, K. (2008). An exploration of clinicians views about assessment and treatment of stuttering. *Perspectives on Fluency and Fluency Disorders*, 18(1), 16-23.

Yaruss, J. S., Coleman, C. E., & Quesal, R. W. (2012). Stuttering in school-age children: A comprehensive approach to treatment. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 43(4), 536-548.

Yaruss, J. S. & Quesal, R. W. (2002). Academic and clinical education in fluency disorders: An update. *Journal of Fluency Disorders*, 27(1), 43-63.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Ana Paula G. Mummy, M.S., CCC-SLP, is a trilingual speech-language pathologist and clinical assistant professor in the Speech-Language-Hearing department at the University of Kansas. She facilitates the clinical team in the Language Acquisition Preschool and the fluency team at the Schiefelbusch clinic. Ana Paula teaches the graduate Fluency Disorders course at KU and co-leads an adult chapter of the National Stuttering Association. She is currently pursuing a clinical doctorate as well as board certification as a fluency specialist. Ana Paula enjoys singing, writing, reading, and traveling with her husband and two kids.

Vice President

Daniel Souza, MBA, MDiv, is a pastor and businessman, with a passion for seeing people grow in their identity and mission. This is what gets him most excited to serve the stuttering community. With degrees in engineering, business, and theology, Daniel brings a variety of perspectives and experiences to the organization. Daniel enjoys guitar, reading, and basically anything else that involves his wife and five children.

Treasurer

Dr. Rachel Dawson is the Global Director Medical Affairs for pneumococcal vaccines at Merck & Co., Inc. Prior to joining Merck, she served as an Adolescent Medicine Physician at Baylor, Scott & White in Temple, TX and Pediatric Clerkship Director for Texas A&M College of Medicine. She joined the military while in medical school and completed her Pediatric residency at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and her fellowship in Adolescent Medicine at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX. Dr. Dawson served one tour in Iraq while on active duty and as the Chief of Adolescent Medicine Services at Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center at Ft. Hood as her last assignment, improving the health of adolescents in the military community. She has extensive experience with immunization advocacy and education. She successfully managed multiple grant awards to promote

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adolescent immunization and patient centered medical homes through school community partnerships. Dr. Dawson has served on various committees of widely known national medical societies and has authored numerous articles on adolescent related topics. She currently lives in Texas with her husband, Jay, and her three children.

Secretary

Monica L. Johnson is a graduate of Missouri State University earning a Bachelor of Science in Business with an emphasis in marketing. She has spent more than 20 years volunteering and working in K-12, while raising two daughters, one of which is a person who stutters. With over 15 years of experience with navigating the complex and emotional aspects of finding support, therapy and methods to help her daughter with disfluency, Monica personally understands the challenges that parents face when trying to do the best they can for their children. She advocates for consistency, training and awareness with effective treatment methods for people who stutter and looks forward to assisting in any capacity, as it is near and dear to her heart. Monica's interests include reading, traveling, volunteering, caring for animals, home design and remodeling.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Spero Stuttering™'s advisory council is made up of key individuals who assist with non-binding but informed guidance, fill gaps of knowledge, offer insight, and discuss and explore ideas together to produce meaningful results and impact. These individuals have no governance or management responsibilities.

- **Dr. J. Scott Yaruss** – J Scott Yaruss, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-F, F-ASHA, is a Professor of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at Michigan State University. Dr. Yaruss has published more than 300 articles, assessments, books, chapters, papers, and other materials about stuttering therapy. He has also given more than 600 continuing education presentations designed to help speech-language pathologists better understand stuttering so that they can provide more effective treatment and support for people who stutter and their families.
- **John Gomez** – John Gomez, M.A., CCC-SLP, is a speech-language pathologist for the Los Angeles Unified School District and a part-time professor at Cal State University Los Angeles. He teaches the psychosocial considerations and the graduate level stuttering courses. He is also a documentary filmmaker. His feature film, WHEN I STUTTER, has been in over 15 film festivals worldwide and has won 7 awards. John was honored with the

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Lois V. Douglass Distinguished Alumnus Award from CSULA and the Emerging Filmmaker Award from the Chagrin Documentary Film Festival.

- **Courtney Plascencia** – Courtney Plascencia, M.S., CCC-SLP, is first and foremost the wife of a firefighter and mother of two children. She has been practicing speech-language pathology for seven years, six of which have been in the inpatient and outpatient rehab settings. Courtney enjoys camping with her family in her spare time.
- **Bridget Allen Chapman** – Bridget Allen Chapman, M.A., CCC-SLP, is an ASHA certified speech-language pathologist. She currently teaches and provides clinical supervision to graduate students in the OSU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic. Ms. Chapman is the Director of the Flaum Center for Fluency Disorders at the OSU Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and has clinical interests in stuttering across the lifespan, school-based issues, professional issues, and innovative clinical education practices.
- **Dr. Christopher Constantino** – Christopher Constantino, PhD, CCC-SLP, lives in Tallahassee with his wife, Megan, and son, Augustine. He is a speech-language pathologist and assistant professor at Florida State University. He teaches classes on counseling and stuttering. He researches the effects of context on the experience of stuttering. Dr. Constantino edited the book *Stammering Pride and Prejudice*.
- **Pamela Mertz** – Pamela Mertz is a person who stutters and is actively involved in the global stuttering community. She is a past Board member of the International Stuttering Association and present Board member of the USA National Stuttering Association. She blogs and hosts the popular podcast “Women Who Stutter: Our Stories.” She was a host for Stutter Social for six years and is a leader in the workplace stuttering advocacy group, 50 Million Voices.

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