Communication Disorders

Honors & Scholarships

2023
Undergraduate Student Honors

Department of Communication Disorders
Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar
Jarod Owen

- Hometown: Kearney, NE
- Major: Communication Disorders
- UNK Activities:
  - KSSLHA
  - Undergraduate Research Fellows Program
  - Special Olympics College
  - Operation Smile
  - LPAC
- Career Plans: Start Graduate School at UNK in the Fall
- Fondest Memory: My Professors and classmates have greatly enhanced my senior year at UNK! I have many fond memories from this past year including giving hearing screenings or World Hearing Day, helping with TOPSoccer, and playing intramural with some of my classmates.
Our Outstanding Undergraduate Scholar is Jarod Owen. Jarod has excelled as an undergraduate in the Department of Communication Disorders with a 4.0 GPA. Jarod will continue his studies at UNK as a graduate student and has already accepted an offer to become a Graduate Assistant come this Fall within the Speech Language Pathology Master’s Program. Recently, Jarod presented his research at UNK Student Research Day with his project titled: A Unique Pattern of Stuttering in a Bilingual Adult: A Case Study. His research won the Undergraduate Research Library award. Congratulations, Jarod!

Dr. Philip Lai
Outstanding Graduate Clinician

Hometown: Gretna, NE

Major: Speech Language Pathologist

UNK Activities:
- Graduate Student Association and Nebraska Area Health Education Center program (AHEC).
- I participated in Research Day and presented on research conducted which sought to understand the online student experience in search of ways to improve student engagement.

Career Plans: Educational Service Unit 11 at Axtell Community School and Mosaic

Fondest Memories: Hanging out with peers in the SLP GA office and laughing despite the stress!

Mila Bednar
Outstanding Graduate Clinician
Mila Bednar

Mila has a sense of calmness, compassion, and patience that provides great comfort to her clients. She places significant importance on individualizing every treatment session and uses evidence-based practice techniques to elicit the maximum potential of each client she serves. Mila is her client’s biggest cheerleader, and she will touch many lives throughout her career. Mila accepted a position with the Educational Service Unit #11 where she will be working as a speech-language pathologist at Axtell Community School and Mosaic. Mila, the department of communication disorders would like to present you with the award for most outstanding clinician. Congratulations!

- Ms. Crystal Hinrichs
Outstanding Graduate Scholar
Katie Piper

Hometown: North Platte, NE
Major: Master of Science in Education in Speech-Language Pathology
UNK Activities:
- Creating Connections Stroke Outreach Project
- Trans Collaborations gender-affirming therapy/research
- Nebraska AHEC Scholars Program
Career Plans: Good Samaritan Society in Kearney, NE
Fondest memory: I have loved meeting and getting to work with some of the most amazing and supportive people and making some of the greatest friends in the process.
Outstanding Graduate Scholar

- **Hometown:** Imperial, NE
- **Major:** Speech Language Pathology
- **UNK Activities:**
  - Graduate Assistant for Educational Administration
- **Career Plans:** Speech Pathologist for ESU 10 in Kearney serving area schools for the 2023-24 school year.
- **Fondest Memory:** My time in the speech pathology program was highlighted by receiving amazing support from my professors to grow in confidence in my clinical skills to help my clients reach their full potential. I will always be grateful for the relationships built with clients, professors, and classmates over the last 6 years at UNK!
Outstanding Graduate Scholar
Rose Sullivan

Congratulation to Rose Sullivan, she is well deserving of the honor of Outstanding Graduate Scholar. Rose completed a school-based internship with ESU 10 at Shelton Public Schools and Loup City Public Schools. She completed her Medical internship at Mary Lanning Hospital and Outpatient Clinic in Hastings. Rose is planning to begin working as a speech-language pathologist for Educational Service Unit 10 based Kearney serving area schools for the 2023-2024 school year.

-Dr. Whitney Schneider-Cline
Outstanding Graduate Clinician

Gina Blackman

Hometown: Norfolk, NE
Major: Speech Language Pathology
UNK Activities:
  Graduate Assistant
  International Bonding Research Project
  KSSLHA

Career Plans: Speech Therapist at Family Physical Therapy outpatient clinic in Norfolk

Fondest Memory: My fondest memories from my time in the graduate program happened in the secure lab, AAC lab, or in the graduate assistant office. In these spaces, I spent countless hours with my cohort and built so many amazing friendships. I always felt supported and welcomed by my peers, and someone was always willing to offer a listening ear. I shared a lot of laughs and occasionally tears with the best group of women and built lifelong friendships. Even though there were a lot of ups and downs, even twists and turns along the road, I couldn’t have asked for better professors or classmates encouraging me the whole way.
Outstanding Graduate Researcher

Alison Gansemer

- Hometown: Kearney, NE
- Major: Speech Language Pathology
- UNK Activities:
  - Alpha Omicron Pi
  - Graduate Research Assistantship
- Career Plans: Central Nebraska Rehabilitation Services - Grand Island Public Schools
- Fondest Memory: Hanging out with Melody and Kayleen while cutting out all our laminated therapy materials.
Alison pleasantly surprised me with her rigor, organizational skills, punctuality responsiveness and strong communication skills. It was a pleasure working with her and I truly hope that she will consider doing a PhD. Alison has done internships at Beatrice Community Hospital, Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools. Alison is planning to work for Central Nebraska Rehabilitation Center and placed in Grand Island Public Schools. One of her fondest memories was being able to look at all the data and presenting it at the UNK research day. She also enjoyed speaking with other researchers & participants.

- Dr. Ladan Ghazi Saidi
Outstanding Graduate Researcher
Brenna Simmons

- Hometown: Brush CO
- Major: Master's of Science in Speech-Language Pathology
- UNK Activities: Stroke Outreach Project
- Career Plans: Speech-Language Pathologist at Sidney Regional Medical Center in Sidney, NE
- Fondest Memory: working on the Gender Affirming Voice Therapy research project with Dr. McKelvey and colleagues form UNL
Outstanding Graduate Researcher
Brenna Simmons

- Brenna is an excellent researcher. She had to complete over 30 hours of training before this project. She communicated with other research partners across the NU system and was diligent in data collection, management and adhering to all rules and regulations of research.

- Brenna interacted with participants, providing a comfortable and comforting experience during research activities. Brenna was flexible when meeting participants and other researchers and scheduling.

  - Dr. Miechelle McKelvey
Department of Communication Disorders
2023 Scholarship Awards
Dean’s scholarship
Communication Disorders

Awarded to an incoming student who has been admitted to UNK for Fall 2023 as a Communication Disorders major or Graduate Student
DEAN’S SCHOLARSHIP
COMMUNICATION DISORDERS
Lindsey Baker

- Hometown: Torrington, WY
- Major: Speech Language and Hearing Sciences
- Minor: Disability Studies
- Campus Activities: Member & Officers of the University of Wyoming’s National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA) Chapter
- Career Plans: After graduate school I hope to work with elementary aged children with a focus on Autism and/or AAC intervention.
DEAN’S SCHOLARSHIP
COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Anna Richling

- **Hometown**: Omaha, NE
- **Major**: Communications Disorders/Speech-Language Pathology
- **Career plans**: In the future I hope to work as a Speech-Language Pathologist in a medical setting!
DEAN’S SCHOLARSHIP COMMUNICATION DISORDERS Maggie Keslar

- **Hometown:** Grand Island, NE
- **Major:** Communication Sciences and Disorders with minors in Educational Studies and Educational Psychology
- **Campus Experience:** Member of the Sorority Kappa Kappa Gamma and of UNL’s National Students Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA)
- **Career Plans:** I want to be a Speech Pathologist in an elementary school!
This scholarship shall be awarded to full-time students majoring in Communication Disorders or Speech Pathology. Recipients shall have junior, senior, or graduate status, a minimum 3.0 GPA, shall have excellent clinical potential, be active in the student organization KSSLHA, and shall have expressed a desire to work in the area of Speech Pathology following graduation.
DR. JOHN COCHRAN SCHOLARSHIP

- Hometown: Wahoo, NE
- Major: Communication Disorders
- Campus Activities: KSSLHA
- Career Plans: SLP at a public school in rural mid-west

Olivia Scott
Seneca Hertell

- Hometown: Kearney, NE
- Major: Communication Disorders
- UNK Organizations:
  - Student leader at CSF
  - UNK Students for Life
  - KSSLHA

Career Plans: Career plans: I plan on finishing my undergrad (two more years), then taking a year off to finish my military training by attending BOLC. Once completed I will attend grad school to obtain my masters in speech-language pathology. After I graduate that, I will pursue a job either in the schools or in a hospital. My dream job is to own my own private practice.
EDNA LARSEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Established to help support students in the field of Speech Pathology who have completed a full year of college work. Selection shall be based on past academic achievement and demonstration of potential for future academic and professional accomplishments.
EDNA LARSEN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

- **Hometown:** Alliance, NE
- **Major:** Communication Disorders and Sciences
- **UNK Organizations:**
  - KSSLHA
  - Operation Smile-Vice President
  - Honor’s Program
  - Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority
- **Career Plans:** Speech Language Pathologist in the School System
- Brooklyn would love to open her on clinical practice some day!

Brooklyn Branstiter
JEAN A. MARSHALL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

To be awarded to students pursuing a graduate degree in Speech-Language Pathology. Candidates shall have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.
JEAN A. MARSHALL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Jean’s son had language development problems which encouraged her to enter the field of speech-language pathology. She later focused her work on children with autism and early childhood education.

“The earlier we intervene, the better chance each child will have.”
Sarah Yocom

- **Hometown:** Cozad, NE
- **Major:** Master of Science in Education - Speech Language Pathology
- **Activities:** Graduate studies club

**JEAN A. MARSHALL Memorial Scholarship**
This scholarship shall be awarded to students majoring in Communication Disorders or Speech Pathology. Candidates shall have junior, senior or graduate level standing and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater. They will also be active members of KSSHLA.
Hometown: Laurel, NE
Major: Communication Disorders/minor in Special education
UNK campus activities: KSSHLA

Career Plans: After graduation, I am planning on getting my master’s degree in Speech-Language Pathology. I would love to work as a traveling speech pathologist or work in a private practice.
Awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student majoring in Communication Disorders or Special Education. The preference is for a student enrolled in Communication Disorders. Selection is based upon academic achievement.
Hometown: Mulvane, KS
Major: Communication Sciences & Disorders
Career Plans: My goal is to serve those that I work with as a future Speech Language Pathologist. I hope to create a positive impact and help them achieve their goals.

Kasha Broce
KENT EMAL COMMUNICATION DISORDERS SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship shall be awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student majoring in Communication Disorders. Candidate must be in good academic standing.
Kent taught for the CDIS Department for 41 years, beginning in 1967 and retiring in 2008. He was pivotal in the grant and design of the Speech-Language-Hearing bus, and impacted thousands of students. He was a strong advocate for stutterers and was a member of the National Stuttering Association as well as the American and Nebraska Speech-Language-Hearing Associations.
Hometown: McCook, NE
Major: Communication Disorders
UNK Activities: C20, CSF

Career Plan: School Speech Language Pathologist

Lanie Overton
WAYNE & VIRGINIA MCKINNEY FAMILY SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP

• Candidates shall be pursuing any major in the Department of Communication Disorders with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above. First preference shall be given to students who are residents of Buffalo County, Nebraska. Second preference shall be given to students who are residents of any of the following central Nebraska counties: Adams, Custer, Dawson, Hall, Howard, Kearney, Phelps or Sherman. Third preference shall be given to any otherwise qualified student.
Wayne & Virginia McKinney Family
Speech-Language Pathology Scholarship

Bridget Slagle

Hometown: Sargent, NE
Major: Communication Disorders/Special Education
Minor

UNK Campus Activities:
• KSSLHA
• Operation Smile
• SO College
• Morter Board

Career Plans: I Plan to become a Speech Language Pathologist and work in rural Nebraska
CONGRATULATIONS to all students from the Department of Communication Disorders!