

NJSHA



New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association

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***NJ Senator Ellen Karcher Among
2007 NJSHA Award Recipients for Service to
New Jerseyans with Speech, Language & Hearing Challenges
May is Better Hearing & Speech Month***

April 24, 2007 – HILLSBOROUGH, NJ – New Jersey State Senator Ellen Karcher will be honored* with the 2007 Distinguished Service Award from the New Jersey Speech-Language-Hearing Association (NJSHA) on April 27 during the group's annual convention in Atlantic City. In addition, seven other individuals and organizations will be recognized for their service to New Jerseyans with speech, language and hearing challenges.

"Communication impairment is the most common disability in the nation today, affecting the lives of over 50 million children and adults and costing the economy over \$30 billion annually in lost productivity, special education and medical costs," explains NJSHA President Monique Kaye. "Everyone needs to be concerned about this issue because anyone can be afflicted with speech, language or hearing impairments at any point in life due to illness or injury. The financial and personal cost of which can be devastating."

"We feel honored to have powerful advocates like Senator Karcher and the other award recipients join us in our constant fight to make sure that everyone in New Jersey with a speech, language or hearing challenge receives the best medical care and insurance coverage so that they can lead fulfilling and productive lives," adds Kaye, who is a licensed speech-language pathologist.

NJSHA's 2007 Award Recipients

Distinguished Service Award: NJ State Senator Ellen Karcher – Mercer & Monmouth County

As Vice Chair of the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee, Senator Ellen Karcher is a strong advocate for at-risk infants, toddlers and preschool children, and an advocate for healthcare insurance reimbursement issues. As a member of the State Inter-Agency Coordinating Council, Senator Karcher monitors the services provided to children who receive early intervention services. She also co-sponsored the bill to establish Early Intervention Awareness Week as the third week of May in NJ.

* *Senator Karcher regrets that she cannot attend the awards ceremony.*

Program of the Year: Speaking of Aphasia, LLC – Montclair

In 2003, Shirley Morganstein, M.A., CCC-SLP and Marilyn Certner Smith, M.A., CCC-SLP, co-founded Speaking of Aphasia to help people with aphasia engage in a quality of life that their disability prevented them from experiencing. Aphasia is a communication impairment often resulting from a cerebral vascular accident or brain injury. It can affect speaking, understanding, reading and writing, which inhibits social interaction. Speaking of Aphasia offers specialized one-to-one and group programs for people with aphasia and their communication partners. The program also trains speech-language pathologists to encourage the development of social interaction skills along with improved language function for people with aphasia.

Distinguished Service Award: Vacamas Programs for Youth – West Milford

Vacamas Programs for Youth is a non-profit organization that provides children from low-income families with positive educational and social experiences in a safe, rural and nurturing atmosphere. Over 5,000 children and teens benefit from the program, which started as a summer camp in 1924, but now offers year-round programs. In 1997, the Vacamas Academy Alternative Education Program was developed for Newark Public School students failing to thrive academically, socially, and/or emotionally in the traditional urban classroom. Vacamas recognizes that effective communication is essential to student success, so all children participate in daily programs that focus on listening, oral communication and group interaction skills before being mainstreamed back to their neighborhood schools. The summer camp program continues and is unique in its focus on providing literacy programming to address the “Summer Learning Gap” (the loss of learning when children do not engage in educational activities over the summer).

Distinguished Achievement Award: Kaan Erdi – Montclair

A student at the Renaissance Middle School in Montclair, Kaan Erdi was diagnosed with autism at five years of age. He had no functional language and had limited pre-requisite verbal behaviors, such as eye contact, facial focus and joint attention. He spent the next eight years in a rigorous home-based program designed by his parents and a team of specialists to develop communication and social skills. The Distinguished Achievement Award recognizes Kaan’s extraordinary progress in all areas of speech and language. Now thirteen years old, Kaan is fully mainstreamed in all subject areas. He has vastly improved his social/relational language skills, learned appropriate sentence formulation, and he is capable of normal conversational turn-taking. Kaan is an “A” student and has a second degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do.

Distinguished Professional Service Award: Linda Tucker-Simpson, MS, CCC-SLP- Maplewood

As a supervisor at University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Linda Tucker-Simpson has trained SLPs for many years, taking students from all of New Jersey’s graduate training programs under her wing and preparing them to work in demanding healthcare positions. Through the American Speech-Language Hearing Association’s (ASHA) Multicultural Affairs Mentorship Program, Linda has single-handedly taken on mentoring culturally and linguistically diverse SLP students and practitioners. This initiative is critical since New Jersey is one of the most diverse states in our nation, and Linda’s efforts have allowed our state to be in the forefront of multicultural sensitivity and services. As the chair of NJSHA’s Multicultural Affairs Committee, Linda recruits future SLPs from diverse populations and organizes presentations to school districts about multilingual/cultural students with communication disorders.

Honors of the Association Award: Monique S. Kaye, M.S., CCC-SL, COM - Watchung

NJSHA bestows its highest honor, Honors of the Association, on Monique S. Kaye, MS, CCC-SLP, COM. Monique joined the NJSHA Board of Directors in 1999 and has served on the Nominations and Elections Committee, Chair of the Website Committee and has held NJSHA Executive Committee positions. For the last two years, Monique has held the office of President. In 2001, Monique received the ASHA Certificate of Appreciation for Outstanding Contributions by the Interdisciplinary Team to the Care and Treatment of Dudley Moore. She also is the recipient of 13 ASHA Awards for Continuing Education (ACEs).

Monique has authored two books, Guide to Dysarthria Management: A Client-Clinician Approach (Thinking Publications, 2000) and Building Functional Social Skills: Group Activities for Adults (Communication Skill Builders, 1992) and has presented at state and national conferences. Between 1994 and 2003, Monique reviewed books, videotapes, and other materials for ASHA, *Communication Skill Builders* and *Singular Publishing*. Additionally, she has served as the associate editor of subscriptions and peer reviewer for the *International Journal of Orofacial Myology* since 2003.

In 2001 Monique began her current position as a speech-language specialist for the Long Hill Township Board of Education. From 1986 to 2001, she worked at *Kessler Institute for Rehabilitation* in East Orange, New Jersey where she served as Assistant Director of the Speech and Audiology Program later in her tenure. She also has taught graduate level courses at Kean University since 2004. Earlier this year, Monique became the first person in northern NJ to be a Certified Orofacial Myologist.

Volunteer of the Year: Tracy Lawrence, MA, CCC-SLP-Edison

Tracy has been an active NJSHA Convention Committee member since 1995, serving in numerous positions including Convention Chairperson and Co-Chairperson for several years. During this past year, Tracy managed NJSHA's Continuing Education Committee. Tracy has 24 years experience in speech-language pathology, working public and private schools, and Early Intervention. As a member of ASHA, Tracy has received two ASHA ACE Awards. She is also member of the Union County Speech and Hearing Association.

What is NJSHA?

The New Jersey Speech-Language Hearing Association (NJSHA) is an organization of New Jersey professionals working in the fields of speech pathology and audiology. The majority members are certified or licensed and have Master's or Doctoral degrees.

What is NJSHA's mission?

NJSHA serves professionals in the fields of audiology and speech-language pathology. NJSHA establishes and promotes high ethical and professional standards and provides programs and services that meet members' needs. NJSHA also advocates for services provided to people by audiology and speech-language pathology professionals.