The First Year Experience

“No second-hand stories, no time off, no vacations” maybe would have soothed or explained what the graduate school experience would encompass. Graduate school has been so different from undergraduate coursework in the workload and demands. It was so easy to take coursework and watch videos of other clinicians and think; “I wouldn’t have done that,” or “well, the answer to why they’re doing this is clear.” Before graduate school, there was adequate time to study for a test; now, you balance an influx of assignments, novel information, exams, all the while balancing clinic as well. It has been challenging, but by the middle of second semester, things slowly develop and you get the hang of things.

The greatest transition in graduate school so far is developing the critical thinking skills to diagnose and treat your own clients – not ones you watch on videos. It becomes your turn. Those critical thinking skills kick in, and you find yourself noticing everything. You are required to think on your feet, and develop independence as the semesters progress. You learn that not every disorder will present itself easily in front of you; you’ll have a lot of challenging cases to work through, ones that do not lend themselves to the ‘text-book’ definition of a disorder. This experience, while inevitably difficult at times, has been designed to make us stronger and well-versed in all areas.

What makes it better is having 37 other students who are going through the same exact thing. You develop close friendships with people who are there to support you when you haven’t had enough sleep, or are really struggling with the same material you are. People who share their notes with you when you’re sick, buy you coffee when you’re tired, and share a mutual “me too” look when it’s 7 pm and you’re still in the library studying. You become each other’s counselors and SLP family. That has been the best part of graduate school – you don’t go through it alone.

Another good part? Knowing you genuinely make a difference. Seeing your growth. Even in the most indirect ways, you grow every single day. This truly overrides any exhaustion I’ve felt in graduate school. I have had many days where I leave clinic feeling like I made an impact in someone’s day, even in the slightest way. The field is rewarding and it is constantly reiterated when you are able to have the first-hand experience to treat clients and aid in their communicative abilities.

Feature!

Check out this article by our very own Elizabeth Kaurich and her time spent in Italy before Graduate school. Link Below:


Some tips for those entering graduate school:

1. Keep all of your slides from undergraduate courses. I’ve referred to them many times.
2. If you don’t know something – do the research for it and take the time to learn about it. It will come back to you. You will thank yourself later when you are confronted with a client who presents a similar case. Knowledge is power. Saying – “I need to learn about this” and making the effort versus “I don’t know” makes all the difference.
3. Try to get some sleep! I can’t stress this enough – your body requires sleep – you’ll feel much better.
4. Use your time efficiently and productively. Prioritize!
5. Be positive – it takes time and experience. Don’t be so hard on yourself!
Rebecca Rea
Hi everyone, I’m the WSSLHA President for the Graduate Class of 2019, and I am so excited to see what this class is capable of accomplishing. This is the first year that WSSLHA is recognized as a part of the Wayne State student organization community, which will allow us to have greater opportunity to raise funds and donate to local charities. I was drawn to a career in Speech-Language Pathology after I had earned my teaching degree in elementary education through Wayne State University. I plan on continuing my work in the school system, trying to bridge the gap between language and literacy skills. Here’s a fun fact: I used to coach volleyball, and I play on an adult competitive volleyball league.

My name is Avital and I am Co-Vice President for WSSLHA’s graduate chapter. I have also served as Historian, and Student Representative in WSSLHA’s undergraduate chapter and love being a part of the association! I hope to work in a pediatric outpatient hospital setting upon graduating. Outside of school, I enjoy hiking, rock climbing, practicing yoga, pottery classes, traveling, and reading.

Logan Vines
Hello! My name is Logan and I am also co vice-president of WSSLHA. Throughout this next year serving on the executive board, I hope to continue WSSLHA’s goals of serving the metro Detroit through volunteering, fundraising, and advocating for those we serve. After graduation, I hope to be working in a hospital setting with children and/or adults. A fun fact about me is that I have a bernese mountain dog puppy that I am obsessed with!

Megan Gurka
My name is Megan! I am the Secretary of WSSLHA. I love being in the field of speech language pathology and I am very excited to be secretary. My goal is to help coordinate volunteer and awareness activities as well as organize and distribute meeting information. I love to bake and in the future, I see myself working in a clinic or hospital as an SLP.

Tessa Jazdzyk
Hi, my name is Tessa and I am the Treasurer for WSSLHA. Some of my favorite activities include working out, hiking, and spending time in the UP. As a future SLP, I hope to work in a medical setting with adults. As a more long-term goal, I hope to improve my Spanish language proficiency and become a bilingual English-Spanish SLP.

Christina Sobh
My name is Christina, I’m the WSSHLA graduate Student Representative! I love visiting new places with my fiancé and experiencing different cultures…and food! My career goals include working in an adult medical setting and one-day teaching adult neuro classes. I love forming personal connections with patients, and seeing their progress and happiness. These are only a few of the reasons why I chose this field!

Trisha Vandyke
Hi, I’m Trisha! I am the WSSLHA Historian for the graduate class of 2019. I am excited to become more involved with the department and to help bring more awareness of what our association is doing to help the community. I’ll be taking A LOT of pictures, so everyone, smile! In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my dog, two cats, and my husband. As a future SLP, I would like to incorporate hippotherapy (horses) and animal assisted therapy into speech-language pathology to aid in both the complex motor system that speech is, and the emotional support that animals offer.
Hi, I’m Liz and I am the Newsletter Committee Chair! I am also the National Student State Officer of Michigan for NSSLHA! I have had experience in preschool education, English language learning classrooms, as well as real-world application for ESL learners, so I hope to spread multicultural awareness while serving on the board. I spent two years teaching English in Italy, and I hope to one-day return! I believe speech-language therapy starts with the whole body. As an SLP, my interest is to understand and respect my clients and to serve their functional needs in their everyday lives. I am fortunate to learn the skills I need to become a successful clinician at Wayne State University.

Hi, I’m Rachel! I am co-chair of the Social Committee and Fundraising Committee. I look forward to getting our chapter more involved in fundraising for our community and speech-language organizations throughout Michigan. In the future, I hope to work with adults in an acute care setting as an SLP. Some fun facts about me include I love traveling, hiking, and dogs, but who doesn’t?! I’ve also been sky diving and bungee jumping, so you could say adventure calls to me.

Hi, I’m Tiffany! I am also co-chair of the social committee and fundraising committee. I completed my undergraduate degree at Wayne State University. I am particularly interested in neurological disorders in adults, and would like to work in a medical setting. I enjoy climbing, hiking, backpacking, and traveling. When I am not at school or clinic I spend all my time with my two dogs and kitty, Emmett, Brynn, and Mia.

Hello, my name is Ugochi and I am the Volunteer Committee Chair. As I am currently a first-year graduate student, my clinical experiences and curiosity have blossomed tremendously, making it difficult for me to narrow which population I want to serve in the future. I am thrilled to currently be fulfilling my career passion in a diverse field with endless opportunities to impact the lives of others. Specifically, it is my desire to render care to older adults and children in marginalized communities, whether that be in a medical setting or early intervention. Some fun facts about me include: I love interacting with people and seeking opportunities to render service in my community. I love all things crafty, especially DIY projects.

Hi, my name is Freya, and I am the Multicultural Committee Chair for WSSLHA 2018-2019! This will be the first year having a multicultural committee within WSSLHA, and I am excited to bring more awareness to multiculturalism and sensitivity to the diversity that is within our scope of practice. I enjoy cooking, hiking, and watching birds with my cat in my spare time. In the future, I would like to work as a medical SLP in Germany.
**UPDATES**

**Fundraisers!**
- Paczkis, Pizza, Bagels—> SUCCESS!
- Book and Toy drive for Head Start locations in the Detroit area

**Events**
- DIA Lunar New Year event- February 24th, 2018
  Featured Korean and Taiwanese cultural activities. Thank you to Dr. Li Hsieh for organizing the event and to all who participated. Happy Year of the Dog!
- March 22nd - 24th, 2018 Michigan Speech-Language and Hearing Association Conference
  3rd Annual Praxis Bowl 2018 Winners!

- April 5th LGBTQ+ info session at 5pm at UGL
- April 7th, 2018
  Word Ready, School Ready event on Detroit’s Eastside, scheduled from 10 a.m.-12 p.m.
  United Children and Families.
- April 21st, 2018
  Word Ready, School Ready event in Southwest Detroit, scheduled from 12-3 p.m.
  Ford Resource and Engagement Center, 2826 Bagley, Detroit, 48216.
- American Heart Association Walk- May 12th at 8 a.m.
  registration; 10 a.m. start at WSU
  Join Dr. Greenwald’s team!

**Better Speech and Hearing Month May**
- Advocacy day in Lansing; May 11th
  Brochure (WSU, EMU, WMU)
  & bookmarks (GVSU & NMU)
- Hand-outs: water bottles, pens, pads of paper with WSU logo.

**Volunteering**
- Tutoring: M-Th 4:00-5:30pm;
- Capuchin Kitchen
  Annual Community Book Fair,