



Rebuilding communication. Transforming lives.

ACC Connection

Volume 15 Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2012

Captain Mark Kelly: A Personal Story of Inspiration and Courage

By Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D.
*President and Founder,
Aphasia Center of California*

The Aphasia Center had an “out of this world” experience on September 4th. We were chosen to be the non-profit partner for a talk given by Captain Mark Kelly and hosted by the Leshner Foundation in its 9th Newsmakers Speaker Series!

This was a fantastic opportunity for the Aphasia Center. As the nonprofit partner, information about aphasia and the ACC was featured in the event program and in a special videotape about the ACC that was shown that evening. Aphasia Center participants, volunteers, and staff members would like to extend our thanks to the Leshner Foundation for selecting us. Thanks to Rosy Chu and her team at KTVU Channel 2 for creating such a wonderful video that raised awareness of aphasia and the ACC.

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Many of you know that Captain Kelly has had an extraordinary career as both a naval aviator and astronaut. He has received many awards, including the Legion of Merit and two Distinguished Flying Crosses. He also flew four missions on the space shuttle, including being commander of the Space Shuttle *Endeavour* on its final flight in May 2011.

However, Captain Kelly shared that one of his most challenging missions has been as husband to former Congresswoman Gabrielle (Gabby) Giffords, following the assassination attempt and brain injury that resulted in aphasia.

I had the opportunity to meet Captain Kelly prior to his talk. I knew that I wouldn't have long to speak with him and had been wondering for weeks if there was something I could say that might improve aphasia awareness. Although newspapers and television have covered Gabby's recovery since she was wounded, few reporters have used the word “aphasia.” I'm

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does”

--William James

guessing that many of you didn't know until reading this that Gabby is living with aphasia!

I shared with Captain Kelly that he and Gabby were in the best position of any people on this planet to raise awareness of aphasia. And that increased awareness would help people with aphasia in so many ways—by decreasing isolation, increasing effective treatments, and

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Captain Mark Kelly

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 2012–June 2012

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

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Captain Mark Kelly: A Personal Story of Courage and Inspiration

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encouraging more clinical research. And that they could raise awareness by using the word "aphasia" whenever and however they could. So, on September 4th, Captain Kelly did just that—he mentioned the word "aphasia" at least a dozen times during his truly inspiring talk at the

Leshner Center!

Captain Kelly helped to raise aphasia awareness with the more than 900 people who attended his heartfelt talk that night. Won't you help us, too? Here are some things you can do right now: share the Aphasia Center's website URL with your friends and colleagues:

www.aphasiacenter.org. Post some information about aphasia to your Facebook page. Mention aphasia and the ACC in your holiday letters.

Thank you for joining with Captain Kelly and Gabby Giffords in helping to spread the word "aphasia" whenever and however you can—YOU will help us make a

Aphasia Center News

ACC Receives 2012 Honors from the National Aphasia Association

The Aphasia Center of California has been awarded the 2012 Advocacy Award from the National Aphasia Association (NAA) for its outstanding record of raising aphasia awareness. In addition to the prestigious Advocacy Award, the Aphasia Center was chosen as the 2012 host group for National Aphasia Awareness month.

We thank the NAA for these honors. We are extremely proud of receiving national recognition for all the efforts of Aphasia Center participants, volunteers, donors, and staff since we opened our doors 15 years ago!

Getting the Latest ACC News

Did you know that you can stay up-to-date on ACC news by “liking” us on Facebook? We post photographs and information year-round on our Facebook page. You can directly access our page from the Facebook icon on our website:

www.aphasiacenter.org. Or search for “Aphasia Center of California” the next time you are on Facebook!

Education and Training Around the World

Aphasia Center of California staff members are frequently invited to provide training to professionals both nationally and internationally. In addition to training certified speech-language pathologists, we also provide internships for graduate students at our program site in



ACC Founder Dr. Roberta Elman shows “got aphasia?” t-shirt to Captain Kelly

Oakland, CA. In the last year, we have provided internships to students from the University of Colorado, San Francisco State University, and California State University, East Bay. Our dedication to education and training means that the ACC philosophy and clinical techniques are making a difference for people with aphasia far and wide!

Help ACC When Shopping at Lucky, FoodMaxx or Savemart!

Lucky, FoodMaxx, and Savemart will donate money to the Aphasia Center of California every time you shop! Just call the Aphasia Center and ask us to mail you a Shares Program card. The program is super simple, doesn’t cost a thing, and you don’t need to give any personal information. Each time you buy groceries,

you just hand your Shares Program card to the clerk, and Lucky, FoodMaxx and Savemart will automatically donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the ACC, at no cost to you. So please call us today to get your free Shares Program card and start helping the ACC every time you buy groceries! To get your Shares Program card, please call 510-336-0112.

Credit Card Donations Made Easy

Did you know that you can make a donation with your credit card to the Aphasia Center? It’s easy to do! Just click on the Donate button at the top of the Aphasia Center of California’s website at www.aphasiacenter.org. You can make a one-time donation or a monthly, quarterly, or annual recurring donation. Your donations help us make a critical difference in the quality of life for those affected by aphasia.

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Raising Aphasia Awareness at the 10th Annual Walk to Talk



The 2012 Walk to Talk Participants at Lake Merritt

An enthusiastic group of more than 125 people joined our 10th Annual “Walk to Talk” to raise aphasia awareness and funds for the ACC. Together, we raised \$34,000 for aphasia programs and services!!

Because of your donations to the “Walk to Talk,” we will be able to offer vital and innovative program services including creating additional chapter summaries and worksheets for our Aphasia Book Connection™ program, paying our instructors for the “Sit and Be Fit” groups, and subsidizing Communication Treatment group sessions for ACC participants who are at or below the federal poverty level. No one has ever been turned away from the ACC because of inability to pay.

Your support of the Aphasia Center is truly transforming lives. We wish we had enough space to list the names of everyone who made a contribution to the Walk to Talk, but please know that we truly appreciate each and every gift that was made. Thank YOU for making the work we

do possible!

John Jankowski brought in the most donations this year—he singlehandedly raised almost \$6,000! John starts his fundraising in early May by combining letter writing, emails, and going door-to-door in his Brentwood, CA neighborhood. Even though John has aphasia, he doesn’t let this stop him from spreading the word about aphasia and the ACC to his neighbors, family members, and friends. John, you are an inspiration to us all!

The ACC had a record number of people raising more than \$500 for the Walk to Talk: Esther Akiba, Mary & Bob Anderson, Fritz Coetzee & Friends, Roberta Elman, Joyce Jones, Mary Jane & Rich Laufenberg, Julie & Vince Lindgren, Eric Liu, Enid Meyer & Sid Dommes, Michael Miller & Shivaun Van Straatum & Jane Marlow, Pat Terry Olson & Friends, Jim & Patty Santanna, Pat & George Springer, Philip Tien, Don & Vicki Welcome, and Bill Wong & Family. Thank you so much for your

hard work in making possible all that we do at the Aphasia Center!

The “Walk to Talk” is fortunate that several outstanding musicians donate their time to entertain us throughout the event. Susan Musicant, Karen Scott, and Sharon Medairy joined us for their eighth year and started off the morning with some lively country and bluegrass music. Howard Zugman stepped up to the microphone next and performed his wide selection of show tunes. Thank you Susan, Karen, Sharon and Howard—your music definitely made our day!

Throughout the event, people enjoyed viewing the various raffle prizes, while the silent auction table provided spirited bidding on items donated from local businesses.

Together, these items raised more than \$1,000 for the ACC! Please join us in publicly thanking the companies and individuals that donated services or merchandise.

This event would not have taken place without the help of numerous event volunteers. Enid Meyer once again did a terrific job as event co-coordinator! And a big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time to help things run smoothly throughout the day: Sid Dommes, Steve Fry, Ann Cupolo Freeman, Tessa Fisher, Brenda Saucer, Joseph Aquino, Maia Olson, Bishop Graham, Pat Terry Olson, Doug Olson, Rachel Heinitz, Scott Canady, Anna Lenox, Kristy Hirokawa, Yadi Martinez-Garcia, Hetti Jones, Jacqui Stadel, Karen Fremont, Kate McDonnell, Jasmine Nguyen, Dan Sullivan, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, and Esther Akiba.

Your hard work guaranteed that our 10th annual “Walk to Talk” was a terrific event and a great success!



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