



Rebuilding communication. Transforming lives.

ACC Connection

Volume 16 Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2013

A 360 Degree View of the ACC

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

Enid Meyer first heard the word aphasia in March 1996, right after her husband, Sid Dommes, survived his stroke. In the middle of the night, she was awakened by Sid's thrashing in bed. Enid realized that Sid couldn't answer her questions—the call to 911 started their journey of life after stroke.

Sid, an Engineer for 29 years with the City of Oakland Fire Department, had met Enid through a mutual friend in 1984. Married in 1990, they enjoyed a variety of outdoor activities as well as visiting with family and friends. Sid was hospitalized for 2 weeks after the stroke—first at a local hospital and then at a medical rehabilitation facility.

Enid and Sid were both extremely frustrated with the communication difficulty caused by

aphasia. They were referred to the Aphasia Center of California, soon after the ACC started, by Sid's speech-language pathologist. Enid says, "It was a relief that he was going to get assistance and I

"You can give without loving, but you can never love without giving."

--Robert Louis Stevenson

was going to get some, too." Enid stressed that the caregiver group was particularly helpful because it
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Enid Meyer and Sid Dommes set up refreshments at the Walk to Talk

ACC Holds its 11th Annual "Walk to Talk"

An enthusiastic group of more than 130 people joined our 11th Annual "Walk to Talk" to raise aphasia awareness and funds for the ACC. Together, we raised more than \$34,000 for aphasia programs and services!!

These funds will provide vital and innovative program services to

a growing list of 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 continues to transform lives. We wish we had enough space to

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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 2013–July 2013

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

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A big thank you to all of our Walk to Talk donors!

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Aphasia Center News



Aphasia Access Founding Members--Dr. Roberta Elman, ACC Founder and President, a member of the AphasiaAccess Board of Directors, is pictured in the back row.

Changing the World for People with Aphasia

Members of the AphasiaAccess, a North American alliance of leaders using a life participation approach to aphasia treatment, recently met in Texas to further their commitment to helping people with aphasia and their families.

Education and Training Around the World

Aphasia Center of California's 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 Oakland, CA. We have recently provided internships

to students from San Francisco State University, California State

University, East Bay, and East Carolina University. Our dedication to education and training means that the ACC philosophy and clinical techniques continue to make a difference for people with aphasia far and wide!

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 go to www.facebook.com/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia the next time you are on Facebook!

Please acknowledge the generosity of these 2013 Walk to Talk Businesses with your patronage:

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- Dr. William P. Tennant, DDS, Berkeley
- Trader Joe's-Oakland
- Ultimate Grounds-Oakland
- Vo's Restaurant, Oakland

A 360 Degree View of the ACC

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encouraged members to share experiences and strategies on how to deal with life after stroke and aphasia. She says, “It was really important to realize that I wasn’t alone.” While Enid received education and support in the ACC caregiver group, Sid participated in communication treatment group sessions and the very first book club at the ACC. Enid says, “Although we have been living with aphasia for 17 years, many aspects are easier, but aphasia will always be a part of our lives.”

As Enid learned more about the ACC, she liked what she saw. She realized that the Center was doing so much with minimal staff, so she decided to volunteer. She began volunteering at one of the “Walk to Talk” fundraising events. She says,

“I felt like I had received a lot of help from the Aphasia Center. The organization was so important that I wanted to give back.”

Enid’s volunteer work continued at other ACC events. She was elected to the ACC Board of Directors and currently serves as Board Vice President. Enid has continued as a volunteer for the annual “Walk to Talk” and works hard to get donations of funds as well as gift certificates from local businesses. Enid and Sid also keep busy being active volunteers for the Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale.

Enid offers a unique perspective about the ACC. As a participant, event volunteer, donor, and Board member, she truly understands the organization from the inside out. And thanks to Enid, and dedicated people like her, this small not-for-

profit organization is able to make a real impact in the futures of people living with aphasia.

When asked why she gives her time and money to the ACC, Enid replies, “I’m a donor and a volunteer because the Center is important to me. It’s my way of giving back to the ACC for all they’ve done for us and for others with aphasia. Because aphasia is not widely known, and this is such a small organization that does a lot, I am even more committed to it.” She says that it is amazing to see how enthusiastic members are about the Center programs and this makes all her volunteer work worthwhile. She continues, “We can always use your help! I encourage you to join us and volunteer at an ACC event and see what a committed and friendly group we are—this is a great organization and a welcoming community of people!”

Walk to Talk 2013 Donors

Continued from page 2

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2013 Walk to Talk Participants at Lake Merritt

11th Annual Walk to Talk Report

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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!

For the 3rd year in a row, John Jankowski brought in the most donations—he singlehandedly raised more than \$7,000! This is an amazing record for any individual, but even more impressive when you learn that John is living with aphasia. And John has informed us that he is already making plans to start his fundraising for our 2014 Walk to Talk! In May, you'll find him going door-to-door in his Brentwood, CA neighborhood to raise awareness of aphasia as well as funds for the ACC! John, it's hard to put into words just how much

of a difference you are making for people with aphasia—thank you so much!

The ACC had numerous people raising more than \$500 for our 2013 Walk to Talk: Esther Akiba, Mary & Bob Anderson, Anita Cox and Family, Roberta Elman, Mark Estigoy and Family, David Giacomelli and Family, Joyce Jones, Mary Jane & Rich Laufenberg, Julie & Vince Lindgren, Eric Liu, Enid Meyer & Sid Dommes, Pat Terry Olson & Friends, Kathy Ott & Katie Mikalis, Jim & Patty Santanna, Pat & George Springer, Philip Tien, Don & Vicki Welcome, and Bill Wong & Family. Thank you so much for your generosity and efforts in supporting what we do at the Aphasia Center!

We have several outstanding musicians who donate their time

to provide us with wonderful entertainment at the event. Susan Musicant and Sharon Medairy joined us for the ninth time and started off the morning with foot stomping country and bluegrass music. Howard Zugman, always a crowd favorite, sang a wide variety of lively musical selections. Thank you so much, Susan, Sharon and Howard—we are thrilled that you have become a part of our ACC family!

This event would not have taken place without the help of numerous event volunteers. Our event coordinator extraordinaire, Enid Meyer, once again made this event possible! And a big thank you to the following people who volunteered their time before and at the event: Sid Dommes, Vicki Welcome, Sue Ewing, Loran Tolbert, Rebecca DeCarlo, Grace Lee, Tori Simmons, Miriam Miller, Lauren Scheiner, Jason Hobar, Jennifer Plotts, Sonam Beckham, Steve Fry, Tessa Fisher, Amanda Scullion, Maia Olson, Pat Terry Olson, Doug Olson, Bob Lewis, Rachel Heinitz, Scott Canady, Dan Sullivan, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, and Esther Akiba.

Your efforts guaranteed that our 11th annual "Walk to Talk" was a ton of fun and a great success!

**This newsletter is published by
the Aphasia Center of California**

**Written and edited by
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**Design and layout by
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