



Rebuilding communication. *Transforming lives.*

# ACC Connection

Volume 21, Issue 2 ♦ Fall 2018

## “These are my peeps!”

*“Don’t be pushed by your problems. Be led by your dreams.”*

~Ralph Waldo Emerson

**By Roberta J Elman, PhD  
CCC-SLP, BC-ANCDS  
President and Founder**

When you meet James Mapps, you realize very quickly that he has never let obstacles get in his way. Born in Martinez, CA in 1950, his parents met and worked in Richmond, CA at the Kaiser shipyards. His father did manual labor and his mother welded, much like Rosie The Riveter. In the first five years of their marriage, they had 4 children, James being the youngest. Their fifth child, Kathryn, was born 13 years after James.

James was raised for the first five years of his life in public housing in Richmond, CA. In 1955, his family was finally able to buy their first home in San Pablo, the same house that James lives in today. In the

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*James Mapps participating in the ACC’s 2018 “Walk to Talk”*

fourth grade, James told his teacher that he was bored. So he, along with 3 other classmates, spent every day in the school library rather than attending their regular classroom. In the months to come, James read every book in that library!

Walter T. Helms Junior High School brought many new challenges and rewards. He excelled at music, Spanish, and math. School became the focus of his life and he made the Honor Society every term. At Richmond Union High School, James added marching band and acting to his growing list of extracurricular activities.

James followed his sister, Patricia, to Reed College in Portland, Oregon after receiving a full scholarship. James majored in psychology and his thesis was entitled, “The Perception of Pain.”

James was awarded a pre-medical fellowship that allowed him to study at Union College in Schenectady, New York. Two years later, he was accepted into Boston University School of Medicine, immersing himself in his courses. His final year of medical school was spent at UC San Diego in a psychiatry internship. Upon graduation, he became a Doc-

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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 2018 - July 2018**

Please see page 4 for “Walk to Talk” donations

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

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# “These are my peeps!”

*Continued from page 1*

tor of Medicine. James immediately began post-doctoral studies at UC Irvine, where he received a fellowship to work for the U.S. government in the Virgin Islands. After returning to California, he worked in Los Angeles, becoming the Associate Chief Resident in the Department of Psychiatry at Augustus Hawkins Mental Health Center. He also worked at a drug rehabilitation program as well as several community hospitals. With hard work, he saved enough money to open his own mental health practice in Cerritos, CA.

James had a thriving practice. However, one day in 2008, while completing a deposit at a bank across the street from his office, he collapsed. He was transported to the local emergency room. He was having a stroke. Confused and worried that he still had patients to see that day, he was told he could sign himself out of the E.R. because he was a physician. He signed the

paperwork, hailed a taxi, and made it back to his office. Somehow he managed to drive himself home where he collapsed again. Five days later, his girlfriend asked the police to check on him--they found him lying on the bathroom floor. An ambulance was called and this time he received appropriate medical care followed by physical, occupational, and speech-language therapies. When he was discharged, his family encouraged him to move back to the Bay Area.

James says, “I was still in a haze for a couple of years following my stroke.” Eventually, he was referred to the Aphasia Center of California. James has been participating in a weekly ACC conversation group since 2012. Reluctant to participate in any other activities outside his home, James credits the Aphasia Center with giving him a purpose for getting out of the house.

When asked what he likes about the weekly ACC conversation group he attends, James answers, “These are my peeps!” Because he interacts

with the aphasia group members more than anyone else, he says that he feels an enormous sense of community at the ACC. This became even more important after his brother and primary caretaker, Glen Jr., passed away 5 years ago. James was forced to figure out how to do more things on his own. He began taking the bus and BART to attend ACC sessions and pushed himself to do more and more. Activities of daily living, such as cooking meals and doing laundry, were now up to him. During this same time, we noticed that James began to participate in additional Aphasia Center activities such as the annual “Walk to Talk” as well as our holiday party. And, with some recent encouragement from both ACC group members and staff, James has started to get back into jewelry making, something that he hadn’t tried since his stroke. He is also enjoying gardening and has planted vegetables and tends to the fruit trees in his own backyard.

James offers this advice to other stroke survivors: Be patient with yourself because brain recovery continues over time!

# Aphasia Center News

## 16th Annual “Walk to Talk”

A record setting 165+ people joined our 16th Annual “Walk to Talk” at Lake Merritt on June 23rd to raise aphasia awareness and funds for the ACC. With the help of a \$5,000 challenge gift from an anonymous donor, we raised more than \$45,000 for aphasia programs and services!!

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf provided a warm welcome to ACC “Walk to Talk” participants. John Jankowski, for the 8th year in a row, brought in the most donations and received special recognition! We had a host of people who raised more than \$500 in donations: Fritz Coetzee, Wanda Crews and Family, Roberta Elman, Nancy & Peter Farber-Szekrenyi, Terry Flanagan, Steve Fry, David Giacomelli & Gail Taylor, Ron Hausmann & Mary Ann Muirhead, Mary Jane & Rich Laufenberg, Julie & Vince Lindgren, Eric Liu, Len & Sylvie Nordson, Jim & Patty Santanna, Myrna & Barry Schwartz, Pat & George Springer, Carl Steele, Team Derrick Wong, Team Kathryn Anderson, Team Rafael Corona, Philip Tien, Marcella Wong, and Bill Wong & Mary Lew. To everyone who raised donations, and to all those who made donations, thank you for your generosity and efforts in supporting what we do at the Aphasia Center!

The “Walk to Talk” couldn’t take place without all of our

hard working event volunteers, including our wonderful musicians: Susan Musicant & Sharon Medairy who got the event started; and the “Almost Home” band who helped finish the event with a musical flourish; our extraordinary event co-coordinator, Enid Meyer; and our volunteers on event day--Sue Ewing, Katey Felling, Rocelle Evangelista, Keith Bartlett, Sara Nevius, Prudence Ashley, Julia Navarro, Byron Sheppard, Jennifer Jacobs, Chatasha Tran, Heather Quinones, Sid Dommes, Monika Zacharewicz, Tessa Padilla Fisher, Amie Zhen-gada, Sami Wong, Steve Fry, Mary Lew, Bill Wong, Myrna Schwartz, Betty Bugaj, Lyssa Rome & Dave Gilson along with Abe, Noah & Ben, Kristen Wehara, Bishop Graham, and Lauren Scheiner. ACC volunteers and donors make everything possible—thank you so much!

## Are you on Facebook?

If you’re on Facebook, please consider selecting the Aphasia Center of California as a recipient of Facebook fundraising! Facebook recognizes the ACC as an official non-profit organization. This means that you can raise funds for the ACC and the money raised will be sent directly to us. Consider creating your own ACC fundraiser for a birthday or special anniversary and then invite your Facebook friends to donate. If you have questions, or would like some help when creating your fundraiser, we’d be happy to assist! Call us at 510-336-0112.

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**Walk to Talk 2018 Donors**  
**A big thank you to all of our “Walk to Talk”**  
**donors! It was a record setting event with more**  
**than 165 walkers at Lake Merritt on June 23rd.**  
**Please be sure to join us in 2019!**

*Space limitations allow us to list donors who made contributions of \$50 or more.*

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