



Rebuilding communication. *Transforming lives.*

ACC Connection

Volume 21 Issue 1 ♦ Spring 2018

Giving Back through Board Service: Myrna Schwartz, Ph.D.

You must master a new way to think before you can master a new way to be.

~Marianne Williamson

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

For this issue of the ACC Connection, I had the chance to interview one of the ACC's Board Members, Dr. Myrna Schwartz, about her life and the variety of ways she has learned about aphasia.

Tell us a little about your childhood and your education.

I was born in the South Bronx area of New York City and grew up in Yonkers. Like most of our neighbors, we were a family of immigrants. My parents had come to the U.S. from Eastern Europe as teenagers and met as factory workers in the "garment district" of New York. My generation was the first to go to college. Thanks to generous scholarships, I was able to

go to New York University, majoring in Psychology.

Where did you meet your husband, Barry, and how did you balance your family and your career?

Barry and I were childhood sweethearts; we met in middle school, began dating in high school, and were married during college. We went through graduate school together, and although both of us earned Ph.D.s in Psychology, our professional paths



ACC Board Member Dr. Myrna Schwartz were very different. Barry enjoyed a 40-year career as a professor and

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Join our 16th Annual "Walk to Talk" Raise Funds and Awareness!

What: The Aphasia Center of California's 16th Annual "Walk to Talk" is a fund-raising event to raise funds for our programs. Our "Walk to Talk" will feature a 1/4 mile and 3 mile untimed walk/run.

When: Saturday, June 23rd, 2018. Walk registration will begin at 8:45 a.m.

Where: Lake Merritt, Oakland. Walk starts at the Downtown Oakland Senior Center at 200 Grand Avenue.

How: Companies and individuals, from walkers with kids to seasoned athletes to people with their dogs on leashes, can participate in this event to benefit the Aphasia Center. Help the Aphasia Center by sponsoring an Aphasia Center participant, asking friends and family for donations, or joining us for the walk. You can register or sponsor a walker online via our website: www.aphasiacenter.org Please contact Roberta Elman (510) 336-0112 to receive a walk packet or for more information.

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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

August-December 2017

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

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Giving Back through Board Service: Myrna Schwartz, Ph.D.

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writer at Swarthmore College, located outside Philadelphia. We made our home in the town of Swarthmore, and raised 2 daughters there. With that as our base, I embarked on a winding educational and professional path that included a fellowship in cognitive neurology, a 5-year teaching appointment at the University of Pennsylvania, and the co-founding of an institute devoted to research in neurological rehabilitation. Balancing career and family was a challenge, but less so for us than most because Barry and I co-parented, and our work afforded a large degree of flexibility. So one of us – usually Barry—could be on call for bouts of illness, parent conferences, school trips, and the like.

When was the first time you heard the word aphasia?

I was introduced to aphasia in 1975, during a research fellowship at Johns Hopkins Medical School. My mentor, Eleanor Saffran, and I had begun

working intensively with two or three individuals who were living with aphasia and had volunteered to participate in research aimed at understanding how their strokes impacted their speaking, understanding, reading, and writing. Each of these participants – Victoria, Lucy, and Henry –devoted several hours a week, over a period of years, to participate in our studies, which were aimed at understanding how the brain represents and processes language. Some of the research sessions were conducted in their homes, where they welcomed us warmly. Seeing Vickie, Lucy, and Henry in their homes, interacting with family members, taught me that aphasia is not simply a neurological disorder, but a chronic condition that individuals and families learn to live with – with greater or lesser success.

What discovery about brain and language do you think would have the most impact and why?

Understanding neuroplasticity – the

brain's capacity to re-organize itself in response to damage. We now know that this capacity is maintained throughout life but is diminished by age, poor health, and other factors that are as yet poorly understood. A better understanding of neuroplasticity would improve our ability to predict recovery from stroke and, in the future, lead to better treatments.

What drew you to serving on the board of the ACC?

The ACC, and the work of its director (Roberta Elman) were inspirations for us at the Aphasia Center at Moss Rehabilitation Center in Philadelphia, as they are for so many aphasia communities around the world. As soon as Barry and I decided to retire to the Bay Area, I contacted Roberta to ask how I might become involved. By serving on the Board, I aspire to contribute to the ongoing vitality of the ACC, learn more about its guiding philosophy – LPA (Life Participation Approach to Aphasia), and work with other talented and committed people to expand the ACC's reach and influence.



Aphasia Center News

Consignment Clothing Donated

We wanted to send a BIG thank you to A Dress Change consignment store in Danville, CA, their staff, and their customers for donating clothing to the ACC! Thank you for helping us rebuild communication skills and transform the lives of people living with aphasia. The next time you're in Danville, be sure to stop in and shop and thank them for supporting the ACC!

Menlo Park Aphasia Groups

The ACC is currently providing a News Forum group and a Communication Group in Silicon Valley (Menlo Park). If you are interested in learning more about the programs at our Menlo Park program site, please call us at 510-336-0112.

Smile When You Buy at Amazon!

Whenever you make purchases at Amazon, start off at AmazonSmile.com instead of Amazon.com. Amazon will actually donate 0.5% of the price of each purchase to the Aphasia Center of California! And there's NO COST to you. If you already have an account at Amazon.com, just log into AmazonSmile.com with the same login information you normally use. The first time you login, you will be asked for the name of an organization you want to support. Please choose the Aphasia Center of California. Once you select

us, all future purchases will result in the Amazon donation being made to us. But you must remember to begin your purchase at AmazonSmile.com. Thanks in advance for your support.

Do You Shop at Lucky, FoodMaxx or Savemart? Program Update!

Lucky, FoodMaxx, and Savemart have updated their S.H.A.R.E.S. donation program. The program is now part of eScrip. You no longer need a special card—all you need to do is register with eScrip online and then input your phone number each time you check out. It's super simple and doesn't cost a thing. Here's the best news of all: Each time you buy groceries, Lucky, FoodMaxx and Savemart will donate 3% of your total grocery bill to the ACC! To register for S.H.A.R.E.S. through eScrip, go to this website: luckysupermarkets.com/shares and select the Aphasia Center of California as your charity. If you have any questions, please call us at 510-336-0112.

Credit Card Donations Are Easy to Make!

Did you know that you can make a donation with your credit card to the Aphasia Center? It's easy to do! Just go to the Aphasia Center of California "Donate" button on the home page of our website: www.aphasiacenter.org. You can make a one-time donation or a monthly, quarterly, or annual recurring donation. All donations help us make a dramatic difference in the lives of those affected by aphasia.

Great News! The Aphasia Center Accepts Vehicle Donations

The Aphasia Center of California has teamed up with Donate For Charity, a company that specializes in processing vehicle donations for nonprofit organizations. Donate For Charity arranges for vehicle pickup, handles all the DMV issues, sells the vehicle at auction, and distributes the net proceeds to the Aphasia Center of California. So if it's time to replace an older car, or if you have a boat and trailer that are just taking up space in the garage, consider making a donation. You'll avoid the headache of selling a used vehicle, help the Aphasia Center of California fund its ongoing efforts, and receive a tax deduction. When you're ready to donate, or if you have relatives or friends that wish to donate, simply call Donate For Charity toll-free at (866) 392-4483 or donate on-line at www.aphasiacenter.org. We hope you'll take advantage of this opportunity and help us expand our commitment to improving the quality of life for all those affected by aphasia.

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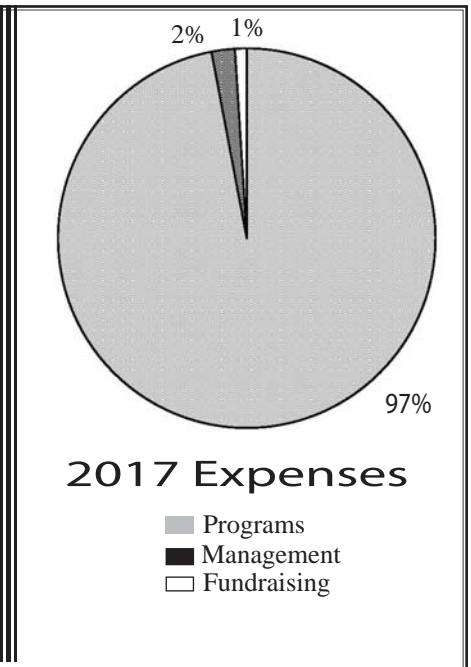
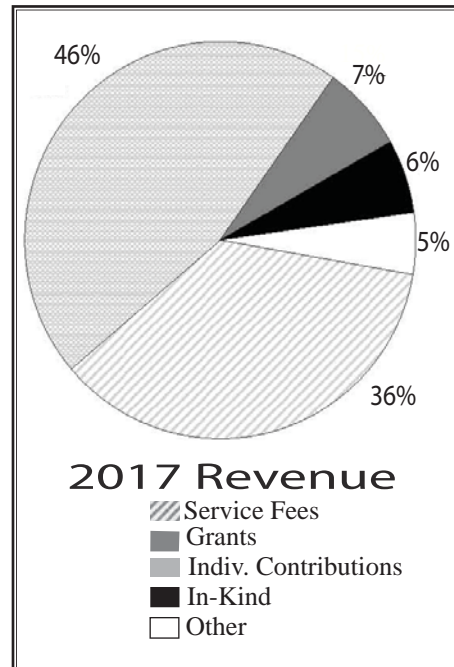
ACC 2017 Annual Report

2017 SERVICES

Group Communication Treatment Visits: 2198
 Reading & Writing Group Visits: 336
 Recreational Group Visits: 748
 Special Events Visits: 152
 Education & Training (National and International): 1020 people (6 trainings/presentations)
 Information & Referral (includes phone, mail, and e-mail): 2063
 Program Sites for Direct Services: Oakland, CA & Menlo Park, CA

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