



Rebuilding communication. *Transforming lives.*

# ACC Connection

Volume 24, Issue 1 ♦ Spring 2021

## Aphasia Center Programs Help to Prevent Social Isolation!

*“When you learn, teach. When you get, give.”*

~Maya Angelou

**By Roberta J. Elman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP,  
BC-ANCDS  
President & Founder**

We continue to receive questions, almost every day, from healthcare professionals and potential clients, about how the Aphasia Center of California is doing, and how we’ve adapted to providing online aphasia programs. Healthcare professionals are extremely interested to learn how we’ve managed to successfully transition all of our aphasia services online. Potential clients and families are wondering if meeting on a computer screen really works.

We’ve learned that providing online aphasia services requires having talented speech-language pathologists with both the experience and flexibility to adapt to the changes that a virtual environment brings. And the ACC staff has these attributes and more! ACC speech-language pathologists Giti Cira, Sue Ewing, Madison Fox, and Lyssa Rome are the ACC’s dream team. Their expertise, creativity, flexibility, and compassion are the exact combination needed to make a virtual aphasia center successful. Their skills, especially those in facilitating aphasia groups, ensure



ACC Speech-Language Pathologist, Lyssa Rome, with ACC TED Talks members

### **TED Talks Groups at the ACC!**

ACC speech-language pathologist, Lyssa Rome, has recently been facilitating 3 weekly TED Talks groups. Participants are watching a variety of TED Talks at home and then coming together weekly via Zoom to discuss what they have viewed. Conversation groups like these provide those living with aphasia with a wide variety of discussion topics that are age appropriate, interesting, and personally relevant!

that every group member stays socially connected and becomes an active member of the ACC community.

Did you know that ACC online services have continued to expand? As I write this, the ACC is now providing fourteen weekly groups: communication treatment groups, TED Talks group, Music Club groups, and most recently a “Sit and Be Fit” fitness group in

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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.*

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**August-December 2020**

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

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## Aphasia Center Programs Help to Prevent Social Isolation!

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partnership with DayBreak and physical therapist, Susan Musicant (see more about our fitness class on page 5). In addition to these weekly groups, ACC volunteers Katelyn Eng and Azlynda Alim are hosting a monthly Family Game Night for people with aphasia and family members. Family Game Night combines friendly competition, language practice, and plenty of fun!

We've learned that assisting people to get (and stay) connected online requires having available technological support from someone who really knows "aphasia." That's become an added part of my job description—I have been assisting all new ACC members with any software or hardware challenges and also respond to daily "technology support" calls from existing members. I'm convinced that providing this level of support is one of the reasons that the ACC's online programs have been so successful.

When I'm not assisting current or new participants with technology challenges, an important part of my job is fielding inquiries from people needing information and referral services related to aphasia. The ACC is committed to helping family members and stroke survivors from around the country, and most recently even internationally, navigate the confusing maze of rehabilitation options.

Social connection is vitally important for all human beings, but perhaps no more than for those who are living with aphasia, especially during a pandemic! For the past 25 years, the Aphasia Center of California has become an international model, through its programs, research, presentations, and publications that demonstrate how important aphasia groups are for reducing isolation and improving communication skills. We remain extremely grateful for your continued support and for becoming part of our Aphasia Center of California community. All that we able to do is because of your generous support. Thank YOU!!

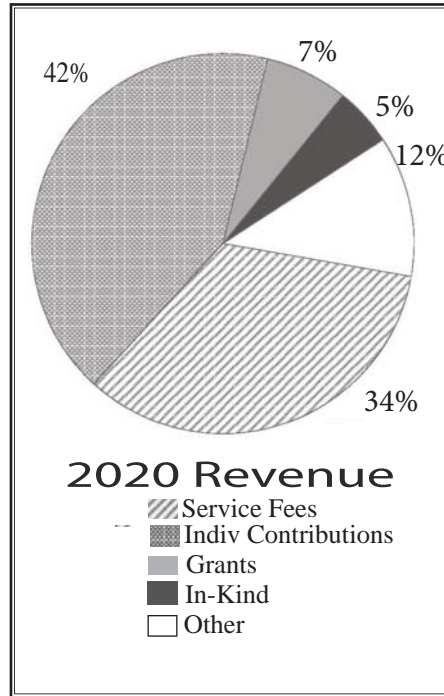
# ACC 2020 Annual Report

## 2020 SERVICES

Group Communication Treatment Visits: 2016  
 Reading & Writing Group Visits: 796  
 Recreational Group Visits: 98  
 Virtual Special Events Visits: 322  
 Virtual Education & Training (National and International): 525 people (5 trainings/presentations)  
 Information & Referral (includes phone, mail, and e-mail): 2610  
 Program Sites for Services: Online!

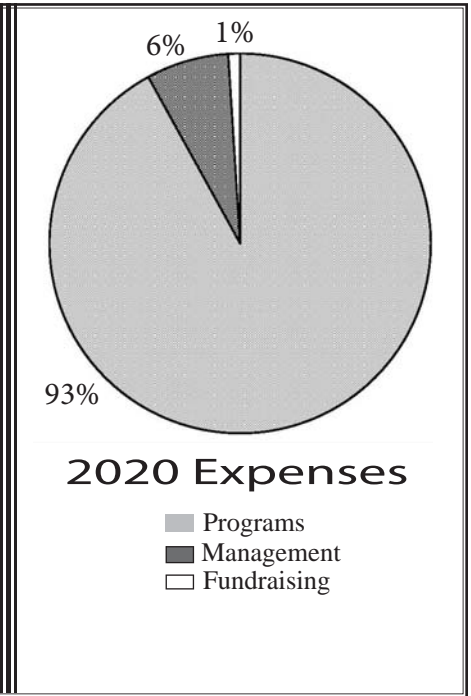
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- ▨ Service Fees
- ▨ Indiv Contributions
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- ▨ Other



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- ▨ Programs
- ▨ Management
- ▨ Fundraising

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[www.facebook.com/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia](http://www.facebook.com/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia)



# Aphasia Center News

## June is National Aphasia Awareness Month!!

Did you know that more than 2 million people in the United States are currently living with aphasia? Did you know that fewer than 10% of the population has heard of aphasia? Raising awareness of aphasia has been part of the ACC's mission since we opened our doors in 1996. Please help us spread the word! How? You can share information about aphasia with family, friends, and colleagues. Start by sending them the link to the Aphasia Center of California's website, so they can learn more about aphasia: [www.aphasiacenter.org](http://www.aphasiacenter.org) Then ask them to share the ACC's website link with all of their friends, too! Let's start a chain of aphasia awareness!

We've also opened an "Aphasia Awareness" Bonfire store where you can purchase an ACC t-shirt or mask to help raise aphasia awareness. All proceeds will go towards funding programs at the ACC. Thank you in advance for helping to spread the word, one ACC t-shirt, tote, or mask at a time! Here's the link to the Aphasia Center of California's store: <https://www.bonfire.com/store/aphasia-center/>

And while we are sad that we are unable to hold our annual "Walk to Talk" in June this year, please watch for an announcement of a very special event in the fall to celebrate the ACC's 25th Anniversary!!

## Keeping Up-to-Date with ACC News!

If you'd like to keep up-to-date on everything that the ACC is doing (in between our bi-annual ACC newsletter issues), we post a few times a week on the ACC's Facebook page and Twitter account. In addition to sharing information about ACC programs and events, you'll find posts with useful educational information, news stories, and videos about

## Keeping Up to Date (cont.)

aphasia, stroke, fitness, and nutrition. Check it out!

Facebook page: [www.Facebook.com/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia](http://www.Facebook.com/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia)

Twitter account: @aphasia\_acc

## "Get Your Zoom On" Fitness Class!



*DayBreak Physical Therapist, Susan Musicant, leading the "Get Your Zoom On" Fitness Class*  
We provided our first online fitness group in April! The Aphasia Center of California is partnering with Susan Musicant, DPT, physical therapist with DayBreak, to offer a "sit and be fit" class called "Get Your Zoom On!" ACC participants of all ages and abilities are involved. Exercise is so important – more and more research is demonstrating that physical fitness and brain fitness go hand in hand!

## Birthday? Anniversary? Raise Aphasia Awareness?

We hope you'll always keep the Aphasia Center of California (ACC) in mind whenever you're getting ready to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or any time you'd like to support the ACC! It's super easy to create a fundraiser and raise donations on Facebook. The best news is that every dollar raised is passed along to the ACC for support of our innovative aphasia programs.

Here's the direct link that you can use to create a Facebook fundraiser:

<https://www.facebook.com/fund/AphasiaCenterofCalifornia/>

And remember, if you ever need assistance in creating your fundraiser, please don't hesitate to contact us at 510.336.0112.

Thank you so much for your support!! YOUR donations are helping to improve the lives of so many people living with aphasia!

## Some Ways We Continue to Spread the Word!

At the ACC, we believe we have a duty to share our work with other healthcare professionals. That's one way we spread the word!

Here are some recent presentations by ACC staff:

♦ **Elman, R.J.** (May, 2021). Still Searching for Understanding: The Importance of Diversity. Invited keynote reply presented to the 2021 Clinical Aphasiology Conference. [Live]. Virtual.

♦ Boyle, M., Akers, C., Cavanaugh, R., Hula, W., Swiderski, A., & **Elman, R. J.** (May, 2021). Changes in Informativeness following Communication-based Group Treatment for Chronic Aphasia. Platform session presented to the 2021 Clinical Aphasiology Conference. [Live]. Virtual.

♦ Akers, C., Boyle, M., Swiderski, A., Hula, W., Cavanaugh, R., & **Elman, R.J.** (May, 2021). Using Complete Utterances to Measure Change in Conversational Discourse following Communication-based Group Treatment. Poster presented at the 2021 Clinical Aphasiology Conference. [Live]. Virtual.

♦ **Fox, M., & Elman, R.J.** (April, 2021). Don't Stop the Music: Aphasia Music Club Tips and Considerations. Session presented to the Aphasia Access Virtual Leadership Submit. [Live]. N.J.: Aphasia Access.

♦ Azios, J., Lee, J., & **Elman, R.J.** (April, 2021). Techniques for Improving Engagement in Virtual Aphasia Book Clubs. Platform session presented to the Aphasia Access Virtual Leadership Submit. [Live]. N.J.: Aphasia Access.

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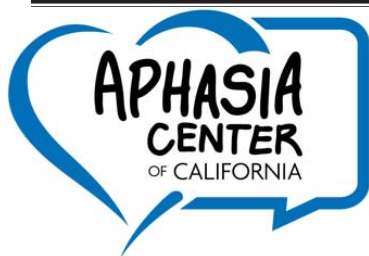
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