



Expert Engagement

Three CSH initiatives further education and scholarship while supporting communities in need

Undergraduate student Hannah Senanayake guides a young client through a therapeutic exercise at the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic.

Talk of the Town

CSH's [Speech Language Pathology \(SLP\) Program](#) has launched the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic (SLC), a state-of-the-art facility at 2400 N. Sheffield Ave.

"Our clinic is an integral component of the minimum 400 clinical hours of training each student must complete for a master's degree," says Program Director Jayne Jaskolski. "It offers the latest technology: video recording systems, electronic medical records, voice equipment, iPads and an extensive library of the most up-to-date materials, assessments and resources for our student clinicians."

The SLC gives "students amazing opportunities to work with clients from the community—infants to adults—by providing screenings, comprehensive evaluations and therapy," Jaskolski adds.

Students treat clients for an array of disorders, such as stuttering, [apraxia of speech](#), [dysarthria](#) and [alalia](#) (speech delay), guiding them through therapies specific to speech sound production, fluency, voice and resonance, receptive and expressive language, social communication, cognition, augmentative and alternative communication, hearing rehabilitation and swallowing.

Treasury Williams Wood, a speech language pathologist who came to DePaul from Chicago's Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, a nationally top-ranked rehabilitation

hospital, directs the clinic, and services are supervised by SLP faculty and adjunct instructors.

Diagnostic and therapeutic services are free, although the SLC accepts donations from clients. Jaskolski says the clinic's model aligns with DePaul's service-focused Vincentian mission and provides diverse clinical training opportunities for students.

"The clinic uses a model where students rotate through different teams each quarter with expert faculty to gain knowledge and skills in the nine disorder areas," Jaskolski explains. "Students remain with the same clinical team and study and learn together in a small cohort. Their team will be their first professional learning community and [hopefully] lifelong professional colleagues."

Rebalancing Community Needs

Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders disproportionately suffered from racial, economic and health hardships related to COVID-19. Those are among the findings of the [AA & NH/PI COVID-19 Needs Assessment Project](#), a national study led by Anne Saw, associate professor of clinical-community psychology.

In 2020, U.S. Rep. Karen Bass called for a needs assessment of communities of color that uses race-based data to address health care disparities and help drive federal COVID-19 relief policy. The result was a multi-organizational initiative, funded by several foundations,

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—Associate Professor Jocelyn Carter

that provided \$250,000 to Saw’s team to study the pandemic’s impact on Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations.

“This study is unique,” Saw says, because “it is part of a large, multiracial research collaborative supported by the National Urban League, a historic civil rights organization, and championed by members of the Congressional Tri-Caucus,” which includes U.S. representatives who are Black, Hispanic, Asian American, Pacific Islander or Native American.

“We partnered with national, regional and local organizations,” Saw adds, “and translated our survey into 13 Asian and Pacific Islander languages.”

The team conducted two surveys in early 2021. One queried nearly 5,000 adults across the country. Another followed up with 421 respondents who reported hate incidents during the pandemic to the Stop AAPI Hate coalition’s online portal.

Among Asian American adults, 53% reported mental health stress, 75% believe the United States has become more dangerous for their racial group, 43.5% reported a decline in health, 55% reported they or a family member lost employment income, 30% needed help accessing food, and 83.3% were receptive to receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

For Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander adults, 62% either personally lost or had a family member lose employment income, 68% had difficulty accessing a health care provider, 38% had depression or anxiety, and more than 40% were hesitant to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Saw says the study team, which “briefed the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus and presented these findings in other legislative briefings,” wants to see federal action taken to address these problems.

Mentoring Youth

In studying stressors on youth living in urban poverty, Kathryn Grant, professor of clinical psychology, discovered that traditional coping strategies do not work well for children. So she created the [Cities Mentor Project](#), funded by a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S.



DePaul senior Adamaris Saavedra, a former Cities Mentor Project mentor, and a Wentworth Elementary School student after a meeting in early 2020

Department of Education, to help youth in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) build a supportive network while advocating for changes in their communities. The program has operated in its current form since 2018. Grant brought in Jocelyn Carter, associate professor of clinical psychology, as a collaborator.

“The project improves the academic, social and behavioral functioning of youth living in disadvantaged neighborhoods,” Carter says.

DePaul undergraduates enroll in a service-based learning course and meet with mentees weekly. “They learn how to support students in the development of their coping skills and coach them,” Carter continues. Graduate students “benefit from learning how to apply an evidence-based program in a community setting—an expansion of their therapeutic skills.”

CPS students receive “a high-quality mentor attuned to their goals, community context, available resources and a commitment to long-term follow-up through college graduation, and they get connected to organizations within their communities where they can build additional relationships,” Carter explains.

The program has worked so well that the Department of Education recently awarded it another grant of \$3.8 million, which will “expand the programming into more schools to reach more children,” Carter says. Students from three other universities in the Chicago area will also participate.

Like their mentees, DePaul students find the program highly valuable. Patrick Bogusz says he finds meeting with mentees “very inspiring, as I got to hear and witness the beautiful visions that others had for their lives.”

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