

## Conference Planning 101

### Fort Worth, Texas July 6–10, 2011

It's time to giddy-up and head south to the Lone Star State for the biggest party of our lives! That's right, we're going big, **REALLY BIG!** Fort Worth, Texas will be the home of the 28th Annual NSA Conference from July 6–10, 2011.

The conference will have moving, informational, and dynamic workshops, along with presentations from NSA All-Stars. During the opening ceremony, we come together to reflect on the week. We will hear from people who were truly affected by the conference. The kids will recount some of their favorite moments and you might hear from people experiencing this conference for the first time. The fun continues during the closing banquet, where everyone is dressed to impress! Bring your dancing boots!

Downtown Fort Worth is composed of stunning art deco buildings, while the whole city embraces its proud history of the West. The Renaissance Worthington is the only four-star hotel in Fort Worth. Your hotel room will be cosmopolitan, yet maintain the Southwestern charm of Texas. All of the amenities you could want at a conference will be available, such as plentiful conference space, fitness center, indoor pool, and high-speed internet access, all served with southern hospitality.

#### NSA is please announced an all new First Timers!

The first conference can be scary for someone who has never been, but without fail, they always end up being unforgettable!

If this is your first conference, we have just a few things in store for you to make sure that your experience will also be unforgettable and that you want to come back for more. We offer daily workshops that allow First Timers to meet 20–30 new people each day in a relaxed and fun environment. After the Opening Ceremony on Thursday evening, we have a designated area in the bar for First Timers to mingle with conference regulars as well as places in the lobby for those who prefer a quieter place to talk. There is a First Timers Lunch on site on Friday (all expenses paid for by each attendee – not part of the conference fees) which gives First Timers an opportunity to continue socializing with their friends and make a few more new ones.

We **GUARANTEE** that when you attend your first conference, you will not only have a great time, but also learn new things about yourself and about stuttering, and make lifelong friends! So, what are you waiting for? Register, reserve your room, buy that airline ticket and come experience the four days that could change your life!

#### Twenty Somethings/Young Adults

The transition from teen to adult can bring all sorts of new challenges. Last year, we brought a special focus to the needs of Twenty Somethings. A dedicated committee of people put special thought into making people in their 20s feel welcome,

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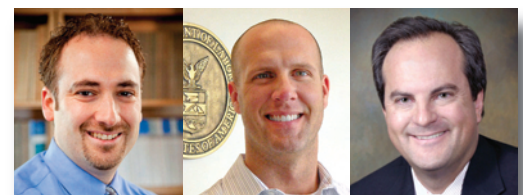
## NSA Board Expands Outreach

The NSA is increasing its outreach to speech-language pathologists, revitalizing family chapters and expanding adult workshops. Also in the works is a new initiative to educate physicians about stuttering and an expanded program for our young adult members. These and other issues were on the agenda at the NSA's Board of Directors meeting on February 11th and 12th in Ft. Worth, TX.

The Board welcomed three new directors: Mitch Trichon and Kenny Koroll, who now head up our Adult Programs, and Dr. Gerald Maguire, who joins our Professional Relations team.

Dr. Maguire, a psychiatrist and frequent presenter at NSA conferences, is organizing a new NSA program to offer continuing education on stuttering to physicians. Professional Relations Board Members Vivian Sisskin and John Tetnowski are launching the NSA's first Applied Research Symposium in connection with the annual conference in Ft. Worth. The two-day symposium will offer intermediate and advanced continuing education for SLPs.

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Mitch Trichon    Kenny Koroll    Gerald Maguire

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Be sure to check out 'National Stuttering Association' on Facebook and 'WeStutterNSA' on Twitter today!

# Two Birds With One Stone

BY PAMELA MERTZ

During the summer of 2009, in a moment of madness, the assistant principal of my school and I submitted a proposal to do an in-service training at our annual School Orientation Day. We thought it would be good experience for us and a good topic for educators. We wanted to offer training on bullying prevention in the schools.

We submitted our proposal and got an unexpected response. They liked it so much they wanted us to expand it into 6 hours so that teachers could get CEU credits.

We were flattered by the request and agreed, not knowing what that really meant. Our Professional Development office decided to make this training available to any educator in our 23-district service area. Administrators could sign up and send representatives from their schools to learn about bully prevention resources and programs. From us!

This meant that we were going to need to prepare and organize a solid agenda to keep educators engaged for 6 hours. That is a long time. We were able to negotiate and offer the program in two 3-hour sessions, which is still a long time. We were going to have to look like experts with an audience that might be a little intimidating. After all (I thought) some of the folks would be veteran



teachers, social workers, and principals. I was no more of an expert than they were. We spent many hours preparing for this workshop.

## How Would My Stuttering Behave?

One of my worries was how my stuttering would behave. From experience, I know that longer presentations invite my stuttering to come out and play much more frequently, especially as I tire toward the end. I worried about disclosing and advertising to an unfamiliar group, because I didn't want the presentation to be about stuttering.

I sometimes worry about that dilemma, because even though educating others about stuttering is important, I don't always want it to be the main focus. In this case, I decided that disclosing right away that I stutter, what it sounds like, and that I am OK with it, would make sense. Once I did that, then I would be able to use personal anecdotes of what it was like growing up with stuttering and relate it to my topic of teasing and bullying prevention.

I did just that and found out several things. I advertised that I stutter, and that

it was easier for me to stutter freely rather than try to use techniques not to stutter. I told the audience that I would periodically tell "my story" as it related to the issues. This worked out great. Several people asked me what I would have liked teachers and adults to do and say when I was teased as a kid. These were comfortable questions to ask and answer, and tied in perfectly. No one seemed to care. I was comfortable, and so were the listeners.

## Positive Feedback

After the first training was over, several people came up to me afterward to share their feedback. One said she was glad I felt so comfortable to be myself. She said I was a good role model for diversity in the schools. Another person asked if it would be OK if she gave my name to her school's counselor. There was a boy in her class who stutters severely and was being bullied because of his stuttering. The teacher wondered if I could be a resource or would be willing to come and talk to the boy and his class. Of course, I said I would be glad to. A third person said he was glad to meet me. He said that he had stuttered as a child and still does periodically. He said very simply, "Thank you."

I was so glad to have done this and to have intertwined my story with the important topic of teasing and bullying prevention. It was easy for me to do so because the personal anecdotes came from the heart, and stories from the heart always come naturally. ■

*Pamela Mertz is from Albany, New York, and is a member of the College of St. Rose NSA chapter. She works as a high school career counselor and regularly speaks publicly as part of her job.*

## Donate Auction Items!

**You asked and we listened – Donate an item for the live or silent auction this year. You heard us right... we are bringing back the silent auction. If you would like to donate to either of the auctions please send Tammy a description of the item you are donating to [tflores@WeStutter.org](mailto:tflores@WeStutter.org) Examples of items that been donated in the past are iPods, software, gift certificates, jewelry, artwork, autographed sports items. Instead of having a separate basket raffle this year we will be incorporating the chapter baskets into the silent auction.**

**Thanks in advance for your gift and your support. See you in July!**

# Passion, Perseverance, Purpose

S. BROWN

Passion, Perseverance, Purpose. These are the cornerstones I am building my professional speaking business upon. And yes, I am a person who stutters. Funny how life can be totally unpredictable and guide you on a journey you never thought could be possible. I never dreamed in a million years that I would want to speak professionally, but I realized something, it's not about me. It's about inspiring others through my story that I can somehow break the shackles of stuttering and encourage people to live their lives.

I've stuttered since the age of six, as I come from a family that stutters. Waiting for that "magical" day to occur when my stuttering would stop never came about. I have always been ashamed and embarrassed by my stuttering. I would always try to hide my stutter just to fit in. But once my "secret" was out that I was a person with a dysfluency, once again I was mortified. I just wanted people to see me for the person I am and not focus on my stuttering. Ignoring my disorder and not talking about my stuttering has cost me several years of my life that I can never get back. I have missed several opportunities because of the fear of stuttering. Within the last 11 years, I needed to stop living in denial and openly discuss my stuttering with others. I found out that this alleviates the anxiety and fear of stuttering. If I stutter, so what? What's the big deal? I am the only one that cares. It's a part of me but doesn't define who I am. What I say is more important than how I say it. It is important that I am able to live with the reality that I am a person who stutters and get on with my life. Acceptance is powerful.

I believe that openly discussing my stuttering has helped me overcome years of torment and teasing I endured as a child, and in return, I make others aware of my dysfluency. Moreover, it helps heal a lot of the wounds and resolves deep-rooted issues that stuttering can cause. My dysfluency is a trait I have but it will no longer consume me or deter me from doing anything I want to do. As others that stutter do, I carry a lot of emotional baggage and shame from years of stuttering. The distress and personal

anguish from this disorder has, at times, made me depressed and lowered my self-esteem. Through accepting the fact that I have a dysfluency, things have gotten easier for me and I really don't think about stuttering. I say what I have to say regardless of whether it's fluent or not. I now openly discuss my stuttering with friends, co-workers, etc. It's up to us to spread the word about stuttering and to help abolish the stereotypes. I find that when I talk about my stuttering to others, they in turn share something with me that is personal. It's a win-win situation.

I've been a member of the National Stuttering Association for 8 years with the last five years being the chapter leader for "Speaking Freely", a speech support group for people who stutter in Timonium, MD. This group has made such an impact on my life and has literally transformed the way that I see my speech. I always remember where I came from and how bright my future really is. And as far as the cornerstones of my business... Passion is for the love of what I do. Perseverance is to overcome those mountains and obstacles I know I will face along the way. Purpose is simple – this is what I should be doing with my life. I encourage you this day not to let stuttering stand in the way of what you wish to accomplish in life. Stop letting stuttering rob you of your life and reclaim what is rightfully yours – your freedom. Freedom to stutter openly and not feel embarrassed. Freedom to say what you desire to say as the focus is on the content of your message and not you how fluent you are. These are desires we share and cannot let anything or anyone hinder us from achieving these precious freedoms. Remember, every time you have a victory over stuttering, you gain a piece of your life back. ■

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*Sean Brown is a professional speaker in Baltimore, MD. You can view some of his speeches on his You Tube site at [www.youtube.com/user/SeanBrownSpeaks](http://www.youtube.com/user/SeanBrownSpeaks). To learn more about Sean as a speaker, visit his web site at [www.seanbrownspeaks.com](http://www.seanbrownspeaks.com).*



## BOARD OUTREACH CONTINUED

Vivian has organized a pilot NSA chapter for SLPs in the Washington, D.C. area. John reported that the NSA Research Committee is reviewing an increased number of proposals to use NSA members as subjects for academic research on stuttering. The Board voted to start a fund for seed money to encourage further research.

In Adult Programs, Mitch is developing a series of regional adult workshops that will build on the success of the 2009 workshop in Washington, D.C. The Board also heard a proposal from Andy Bowers to increase the participation of young adults in the NSA, and appointed a committee headed by Board Member Stephanie Nicolai to make this happen. Stephanie also is working with the revamped Teen Advisory Council.

Family Programs Board Members Stephanie Coppen and Sheryl Hunter, who joined the Board last year, are working with NSA staff member Sarah D'Agostino to strengthen Family Chapters. The process for organizing youth days has been streamlined, and we have six programs scheduled for 2011.

Plans are on track for a spectacular conference in Ft. Worth. Conference plans include a bigger welcome for first-time attendees. The site for the 2012 conference will be announced in Ft. Worth.

175 active NSA volunteers, coordinated by Board Member Cathy Olish, are distributing NSA posters, speaking to school SLPs, responding to Internet articles on stuttering, uploading video clips to YouTube and the NSA web site, and welcoming new NSA members. Volunteer Mandy Finstad maintains the NSA Facebook page and Twitter posts.

Treasurer Bill Smith reported that the NSA remains financially sound, but, like most other nonprofit organizations, has seen a decline in member dues, contributions and fundraising. Barry Liben reported that fund development efforts are on track.

The Board thanked directors who have rotated off the board: Marybeth Allen, Marc Rosenbaum and Tracey Wallace.

# ODDS&ENDS

FROM DAVID BLAZINA



## Speech Party

Ever hear of a "Speech Party"? 21 children/teens who stutter, and their families, were guests of honor for the Third Annual USF/NSA Youth Day, held at the University of South Florida's Tampa campus. The day was co-hosted by USF's National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) and NSA's Tampa Chapter. **Delroy McPherson, Kalie Morris, and Brad Madsen** welcomed guests and led ice-breaker activities. In separate break-out sessions, **Jennifer Romero** and **Katie Fineran** explored emotions and self-concept with 3- to 5-year-olds. **Sam Stitzel** and **Erica Heatherington** ran a workshop for 6- to 8-year-olds, discussing feelings about stuttering, learning strategies for coping with bullying/teasing, and exploring personal strengths. **Lorissa Nolask** and **Keriann Brown** tackled these same issues with 9- to 12-year-olds. **Francine Aisenberg** and **Elizabeth Mcgeehan**, with help from Tampa NSA'ers (**John Vento, Jennifer Glen, Nathan Fairclough, Brad Hayes, Tim Gates, Gary Poole**), worked with teens to explore their feelings and attitudes about stuttering, as well as their similarities and differences with other peers.

Most of the child/teen sessions used a multi-media approach, including books written by other children who stutter, videos about people who stutter, music and rap, and lots of fun, interactive activities aimed at diminishing the impact of stuttering. For example, a highlight of the teen group involved making confidential postcards about their experiences with stuttering which

will be sent to the "Post Secret" project. Assistant Professor **Nathan Maxfield** presented a "Stuttering 101" talk to parents, who were then led through small-group discussions by **Nada Hanna** and **Kalie Morris**. **Brad Hayes**, along with the teen group, presented a stuttering "rap" at lunch, backed by guitar music from **Nathan Fairclough**. USF's mascot, Rocky The Bull, crashed the party around lunch, too. As the Youth Day transpired, **Vivian Sisskin** captivated 90 Tampa-area Speech-Language Pathologists with her continuing education talk about diagnosis and treatment of childhood stuttering. At day's end, participants enjoyed ice cream cake donated by **Matt Provenzano**. We appreciate the involvement of **Mike Bauer** from Orlando's NSA chapter, graduate students from USF's Speech-Language Pathology Program, and our many volunteers drawn from the ranks of USF NSSLHA; and of course a huge thanks to **Tammy Flores** for coordinating with us!

## Our Time's Benefit Gala

Our Time will honor **David Seidler**, writer of *The King's Speech*, for his many accomplishments as a person who stutters at its 9th Annual Benefit Gala, "I Could be King," in NYC. The event's Honorary Chair is **Colin Firth**. It will take place at The Skirball Center for the Performing Arts and the Rosenthal Pavilion at NYU and will celebrate Mr. Seidler and *The King's Speech* for promoting awareness about stuttering, which is central to Our Time's mission. His film has inspired the Our Time youth by demonstrating that there is no limit for people who stutter, as long as they believe in themselves and the value of their voices. The benefit will feature celebrities from the film, theater, television, and music industries including a performance by **Carly Simon** alongside Our Time's young participants who stutter, followed by an elegant dinner overlooking NYC with celebrity guests. For more information please visit [www.ourtimestutter.org](http://www.ourtimestutter.org).

## Oscar award winner, David Seidler!

Seidler won for best original screenplay for *The King's Speech*. David's acceptance speech rang throughout the stuttering community! After accepting the Oscar, he said: "I accept this on behalf of all the stutters in the world. We have a voice. We have been heard."



## NOLA Information Booth

In October, **Landon Murray** and the rest of the New Orleans Chapter held an information booth at a local Mall. They passed out tons of pamphlets and even added 10 new names to the email list. It was a great day and a very good first step in adding members to the local Chapter.

## Review: Going with the Flow

In his latest film, *Going with the Flow*, **Phil Schneider** has decided to introduce his own voice to the camera. After over forty years experience in the field, Phil does not believe that fluency is the goal and does not feel that there is one right approach. Rather than telling us that he has all the answers, his film tracks the journey of two people who he meets in his therapy room.

As the film starts we are introduced to a ten-year-old Michael and, as the camera focuses on the shape of his mouth pushing through blocks and repetitions, we meet a boy clearly determined to make himself heard. He chooses to oscillate in and out of therapy and, as Phil explains, "He realizes that it is a choice, and it is important not to feel that he has to work on it all the time, that he is as entitled to relax and speak as it comes to him automatically, as anyone else is entitled to that."

The next character we meet is a young, outgoing college student named Sarah. In contrast to Michael's

overt but confident stuttering Sarah is a covert stutterer who talks about the deep shame and loneliness she feels. In the safety of Phil's office she starts to experiment with the ideas of pausing, telling people that she stutters and stuttering on purpose. As the film comes to a close she explains, "Now I can say 'I stutter', and that eliminates the tension and anticipation of a listener's negative reaction".

In both Sarah and Michael we see two people who clearly feel that they can choose to use, or not to use, the tools Phil has taught them. Safe in his friendship, they know that they will not be judged either way.

⇒ Katherine Preston

## TSHA Convention

On March 3–5 2011, **Tammy Flores** and **Lee Reeves** manned the NSA booth at the TSHA convention in Ft. Worth, TX. **Andy Bowers**, **Anthony Valle** and **Nina Reeves** also came by to help out. There were over 4,000 SLPs from all over the state of Texas and many surrounding states attending the convention in the monstrous Ft. Worth Convention Center. There were over 200 exhibit booths set up, too, covering every phase of Speech Language Pathology including school recruiting, language development products, services for the deaf, and rehab facilities. Attendees got a real appreciation for the wide range of speech pathology services available in Texas.

We gave out LOTS of NSA materials including pamphlets, buttons, and various books. We talked to an endless stream of SLPs and students who came by our booth for both information on stuttering and our bottomless bowl of chocolates! We lost count of the number of people we talked to, probably nearly a thousand, and collected several hundred names and email addresses. People are EXTREMELY interested in stuttering and we made sure that everyone there knew about the NSA and the important work we are doing for people who stutter. It was exhausting,

but we made a difference for the NSA and stuttering awareness!

## Congratulations to Landon and Lizzy!

The National Stuttering Association would like to congratulate Landon Murray, the chapter leader for the New Orleans region, on his engagement to his longtime girlfriend, Lizzy Mayer. According to Lizzy, they have been together four years and celebrated their anniversary by staying at the Le Pavilion Hotel, and while Lizzy was snapping some pictures, Landon encouraged her to "take a picture of this" and promptly pulled out a ring. We wish them both much happiness on their upcoming nuptials!

## NY Health Expo

The Expo went well! I only had one person to help me but we made the best out of it. A lot of people asked questions about *The King's Speech*. We met a few PWS and gave them our meeting information and we also met two SLPs. In addition, we approached the camera guy from YNN who didn't even know we were there and asked him if he could interview me. He did. And, he told me that if *The King's Speech* won any Oscars that I would probably be getting a call from the Buffalo News the following day. And, I did!

⇒ Adrian McAdory

## KSHA Convention

This year's KSHA convention proved to be a remarkable experience for me! My last convention was in 2000 and at that time I remember there were only a few attendees who had heard of the NSA.

This year? Only one grad student from a remote part of the state had NOT heard of the NSA! I was amazed at how many SLPs, in their words, were "very familiar" with the NSA. Our efforts in outreach have clearly paid off. **Miranda Smith**, **Tom Scharstein** and I will be traveling this spring as we have begun the process of planning 4 NSA Youth Days in different parts of the state at the urging of the SLPs we met. Our booth looked fantastic thanks to the materials and banners we received from Tammy at the national office. Thanks also to **Pam Woebkenberg** and **Sarah Nikirk** for their part in staffing the booth.

Many speech language pathologists came up to ask questions about the organization and wanted to hear personal stories of not only my experiences with speech therapy but any suggestions I may have as they try to improve the lives of their clients. I talked about how wonderful the NSA has been and how it provided the confidence I needed to become the person I am today. My friends, if our experience in KY is any indication of the positive results obtained by facilitating

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**STUTTERING**  
**A 360° LOOK AT HOW TO TREAT & LIVE WITH STUTTERING**  
**WEEKEND CONFERENCE FOR PRACTITIONERS,  
PEOPLE WHO STUTTER AND THEIR FAMILIES**  
MAPLE WOOD INN 7th NORTH ST. APRIL 8 & 9  
**315.468.3414**  
**www.connectionstx.com** Connections  
family-centered therapies

**Continuing Education Seminars and Youth Days**  
**Syracuse, New York: April 8th and 9th**  
**Baldwin Park, California: April 16th**  
Check the NSA Web site for updated information regarding these events  
or send an e-mail to [info@WeStutter.org](mailto:info@WeStutter.org).

# CHAPTER NEWS

FROM BONNIE WEISS

## ODDS & ENDS CONTINUED

a booth at your state language convention, all I can say is "Give it a try. The results will be unbelievable!"

I want to thank the NSA for giving me the opportunity to volunteer for my favorite organization in the world! 📧 Jason Faust

### Austin Robinson



Austin Robinson, long-time NSA member, passed away suddenly on Saturday, February 26, 2011 at 22 years old. He is remembered as a kind, smart, giving person and an accomplished bassoonist and pianist who planned to share his love of music with middle school students after finishing his studies in Music Education at Texas Tech University, where he was working towards a Master's Degree with Honors. Funeral services for Austin were held on Saturday, March 5 at 2:00 PM at the Turrentine Jackson Morrow Funeral home in McKinney, TX.

Donations are being accepted to the National Stuttering Association's Youth Program in Austin's name. For more information or to make a donation, please contact Tammy Flores at 800-WeStutter (937-8888).

Donations are being accepted to the National Stuttering Association's Youth Program in Austin's name. For more information or to make a donation, please contact Tammy Flores at 800-WeStutter (937-8888).

## Show Your Support

You can show your support for the National Stuttering Association by becoming a corporate sponsor and buying an ad in our conference program (remember: this donation is tax-deductible). Contact Tammy at [tflores@westutter.org](mailto:tflores@westutter.org) for more information.

### Auburn, Alabama

The Auburn Chapter met on February 8th with eight people in attendance – three college students who stutter, two faculty members, two graduate students and one undergraduate student. They talked about *The King's Speech* and how everyone felt about it. They also had a student majoring in Public Relations come to the meeting to learn more about what the group does, and she videotaped Embry Burrus reading the opening words. She wrote an article and posted the video on the "Auburn Family" website.

### Boca Raton, Florida

Dale Williams reports that the Boca Raton Chapter had an interesting meeting. Ten people showed up for the meeting. A local television station filmed part of the meeting. *The King's Speech* movie was the topic of interest and they also had a chance to talk with the reporter about the experiences of stuttering and what advances group members hope will come about as a result of the film.

### Chicago, Illinois

The Chicago Metro North Chapter is now meeting at the Central Speech and Language Clinic in Long Grove instead of the Lake Forest Hospital. Also, Kristin Chmela, a speech and language pathologist has been attending the meetings, which has helped our attendance a lot. ABC-7 News recently interviewed people in the group about the movie, *The King's Speech* as well as the National Stuttering Association. The clip aired before the Academy Awards. Art Struss also reports that the chapter had two social activities included a holiday dinner party and a cross-country ski outing.

### Columbia, South Carolina

Charley Adams writes that the Columbia Chapter met on Thursday, February 10th with 48 people in attendance. There were 36 graduate students, 11 persons who stutter, four speech language pathologists, and

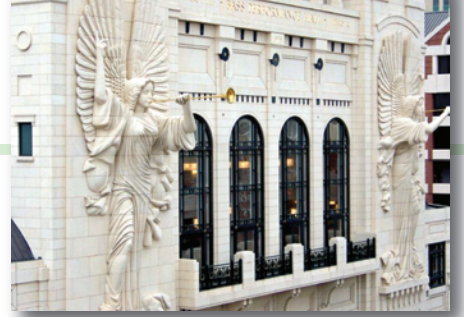
one journalist. Every February the chapter holds their monthly meeting during Charley's graduate class on stuttering. The journalist writes for The State newspaper, and he contacted Charley about sitting in on the class to get some information about *The King's Speech* for an article he is writing to correspond with the Oscars. This was a special meeting as every group member got to speak.

### Rockville, Maryland

There were seven people at the December 7th Chapter Meeting. They had a "free-flowing" discussion instead of doing an organized activity. Chapter members also had a Holiday get-together at Buca di Beppo, an Italian restaurant in Northwest D.C. They had a great time and great conversation. The chapter also saw *The King's Speech* on December 17th. The theater had a table, which displayed National Stuttering Association brochures, as well as NSA buttons, pens, and a small banner. Thank you to Tammy Flores for shipping the literature, etc. directly to the theatre says co-leader Jerome Mortman.

### Twin Cities, Minnesota

The Twin Cities Chapter met on Thursday, February 10th at Bethlehem Baptist Church in downtown Minneapolis. There were 28 people in attendance. This is an all time record attendance for the chapter! Included in the 28 were 11 people who do not stutter. There were 17 people who stutter at the meeting including some who had not been seen for a long time as well as a couple of newcomers. The meeting provided an incredible opportunity to educate the public about stuttering and people who stutter. Linda Hinderscheit, the Chapter Leader had been contacted by the Minneapolis Star Tribune. They sent a reporter, a photographer, and a videographer to the meeting. An article about the chapter was printed in the newspaper and they posted the accompanying video to their website.



## CONFERENCE CONTINUED

included and enlightened. They mentor the younger generation. They learn from and inspire people who have lived with stuttering for longer.

We understand that you are past the “teen scene” and are not quite feeling the “adult crowd” just yet. We had this in mind as we planned our conference program. Workshops will deal with the issues that challenge most Twenty Somethings like dating/relationships, job interviews, career choices, advertising your stuttering and many others. We have planned workshops, dedicated the Twenty Somethings committee to host social outings and other age-specific activities. No doubt that you belong at this conference! We heard what you wanted and planned it for you.

### Family/Youth Program

The NSA conference 2011 is going to be big! Invest time with your family to explore, learn, network and share stuttering with leading experts who specialize in working with children and adolescents who stutter, as well as with other families. Bring the whole family! Parents, children who stutter (ages 7 and older) and their siblings can participate in activities and workshops which will enrich the whole family.

Families who have experienced the NSA conference have said they wish they had known about us years before. This is a rare chance for you to take a break from life's busy days to focus on your child's stuttering and what you can do to help. Meet with some of the world's foremost stuttering specialists while sharing stories with others families. Children and teens could be reluctant to come for the first time but chances are, they'll want to come back. The simple act of meeting other people who stutter can be liberating!

In private sessions, parents' questions will be answered by meeting teens and adults who stutter. At the same time, children will explore their stuttering in a fun and safe environment. The NSA's family program staff has some BIG ideas for new activities to make everyone!

You are not alone in the lone star state! These three and a half days of activities will be in an environment where people who stutter are the majority. The conference will officially begin Wednesday with a meet 'n greet then

off we go. Thursday morning's Family Orientation Workshop will familiarize you with the conference schedule while giving you a chance to become better acquainted with the Family Programs staff, the Teen Advisory Council and other families. This program will provide you with the opportunity to network with leading experts who specialize in working with children and adolescents who stutter, as well as with other families. Activities include parent/teen round table discussions, expert panels, therapy advice, teen lead workshops, pool time, all sorts of new hands-on/action packed activities for the kids, and much more!

### Networking Opportunities

The NSA annual conference is going to work! Join us at the NSA conference in Fort Worth in July for networking opportunities, career advice, resume assistance, and job searching tips! At the NSA conference you can get help with your career, whether you are a teen looking at careers or college majors, a college student looking for an internship or resume advice, a “dislocated worker” looking for a new job, someone looking for a career change, or if you just want to brush up on your networking and interviewing skills. We will have a repeat of last year's fun and successful networking lunch, and we'll also have workshops and other activities to help you boost your career or find your dream job! The NSA conference has always been a place to find friends and support, but now it's also the place to find experts in dozens of fields, as well as people who can help you network and explore your career path. And they've all been in your shoes before!

Do you have expertise to share? We are looking for volunteers to help out by giving workshops on careers, offering advice to newcomers to your field,

critiquing resumes, or helping with interview tips. Please email the NSA office at [info@WeStutter.org](mailto:info@WeStutter.org) if you want to help out!

### Support Group Leader Training

Thursday, 8:30 am–10:00 am this year's program is designed as an open forum with discussion groups on chapter growth, leadership development, and more.

### SLP Information

This year we will be offering up to 1.6 CEUs for the conference, so you will be able to earn more CEUs than ever before.

### Additional CEU Information

This is being offered as 0.4 CEUs Thursday, 1:00pm–5:00pm  
**Facilitating Change in the Attitudes & Thinking of Children, Teens, & Adults who Stutter**  
Presenter: Diane Games

### Want to help?

We thought so! The NSA is now collecting items for both auctions. Items of interest include: sports memorabilia, electronics, art, jewelry, and more. If you have any questions about the auction, items, or anything else, feel free to e-mail us at [info@WeStutter.org](mailto:info@WeStutter.org) or call us at 800-WeStutter (800-937-8888).

### Scholarships Available!

Need help getting to the conference this year? Due to generosity of corporate sponsors and many of our members, we are pleased to announce that scholarships are available once again to provide financial assistance for adults/families who would like to attend our annual conference. If you would like more information regarding scholarships please tell us why at [tflores@WeStutter.org](mailto:tflores@WeStutter.org). ■

## Priceless (In the Spirit of MasterCard...)

BY ELANA KAHAN

Roundtrip Airfare to Fort Worth: \$250

Registration Fee for the NSA Convention: \$150

Four Night Stay at the Renaissance Worthington Hotel: \$225

Going home, stuttering in front of the mailman, and not caring about it... Priceless

# The Midwest Meets The House of Mouse

BY STEVEN KAUFMAN



Jessica Giuffre, by all accounts, is just a 19-year old young woman who enjoys most of the average things that a typical college student does. She loves meeting new people, writing, watching movies, shopping, and exploring Chicago. She also happens to be one of the few amazingly lucky individuals who had a chance to intern at one of the biggest theme parks in the country: Walt Disney World.

Jessica, who is currently a student at College of Dupage in Glen Ellyn, Ill., is an aspiring speech pathologist. A native of Naperville, Ill., she attends classes and is a big fan of studying English and the natural sciences, such as anatomy and physiology. While she and her dad, Bill, were enrolling in classes, she just happened to see an advertisement on the bulletin board for the Walt Disney World College Program. "We were like, this looks kind of neat-it was my freshman year," she said. "We didn't think much of it at first, but it seemed like it was really intense and I didn't think I was ready to leave home." Still, the opportunity to meet new friends was the biggest selling point. "Last year, I had to watch all my friends go away," she stated. "I heard great stories, how they met so many more friends. I wanted to be around others who were at the same place in their life."

It was that sentiment that spurred her on to meet with a recruiter for the program who gave her the overview about the application process. She was convinced right then and

there. "I felt I needed to grow up and learn about me," she remarked. Her parents and her sister Allison were extremely supportive. After she applied online and filled out numerous personality tests, the biggest hurdle had yet to be cleared: the phone interview. "I was just nervous about talking on the phone because that is when I am usually disfluent," she commented. "My parents are not big on advertising, but I had to be my own person and stand up for myself." Then one day, she was checking her e-mail and found out she was accepted-with a slight catch. "I got so excited but I found out that my role (all employees are cast members) was custodial," she said. "I was in tears, but my mom said any job at Disney World is good."

It can be daunting to pack up and move across the country, while getting used to the requirements of the program. Being a person who stutters can also make things more challenging. "All of my roommates have not reacted to my stuttering at all," she said. "I love all my co-workers." She's already met people from different regions (Indiana, Long Island, and Arizona). Jessica is also extremely grateful to the NSA for helping her in this journey. "Working and having to interact with guests on a regular basis is not easy especially when you stutter, and if customers rush you it is so uncomfortable. Just knowing there are others are experiencing the same thing is so important me. The NSA helped me find myself."

While the program will end in January, Jessica has already decided to remain seasonal. But her time at Disney World has helped

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her come to a realization. "I've concluded that being a speech pathologist is what I want to do!" she stated emphatically. She and her sister are also looking to join the Teen Advisory Council. Still, she did admit there are some pretty cool perks of interning at the "House of the Mouse". "You live in full-furnished apartment complexes, participate in the 'Night of Stars' Gala, and go to the parks for free." And to top it all off, Disney World gave her the biggest lesson of her life: "I've learned I can stutter freely."

Dreams really do come true after all. ■



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