

# Summary of the Second Annual Clinical Education Forum at AudiologyNOW! 2017

By Doris Gordon

The second annual Clinical Education Forum was held April 8, 2017, in Indianapolis during AudiologyNOW! This year, ACAE jointly collaborated with the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) in planning the program.

A task force from both organizations spent the fall of 2016 and first quarter of 2017 proposing a diversified program that would be relevant to audiology students in clinical education. As a result, the four-hour morning session was entitled, “Student Immersion Experiences: Different Perspectives on Current Challenges and Successes.” Lisa Hunter, PhD, chair, ACAE, and Ann Eddins, PhD, vice president for academic development, CAPCSD, moderated the program.

The first hour and a half was devoted to comments by students. A presentation was made by Joshua Huppert, doctoral student in audiology and president of the Student Academy of Audiology (SAA). He reviewed the SAA’s important survey conducted in 2015 to students throughout the United States who were involved in the application process for their externship experience. An analysis of the 245 responses received included five categories: Qualities of a Good Externship; University Requirements and Support; Applying to Placements; Strengths of the Current Process; and Weaknesses of the Current Process.

See details about these results by visiting the Academy website [www.audiology.org/publications/guidelines-and-standards/2015-externship-survey-analysis](http://www.audiology.org/publications/guidelines-and-standards/2015-externship-survey-analysis).

Following Joshua’s remarks, he was joined by a second doctoral audiology student, Madison Saunders, from the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA), for an interview about their externship experiences led by Mark DeRuiter, PhD, president-elect, CAPCSD. Dr. DeRuiter’s questions focused on some of the challenges and successes that the students faced during their experiences. Joshua and Madison provided candid and illuminating perspectives of what they hoped to find and what they found throughout their externship.

Some of their responses could be summed up in the following statements:

- Students want honest feedback on a regular basis—they want to know what they are doing well and where they need to improve.
- Students want to participate in all aspects of the externship, meaning they would like to see patients from different populations and diagnostic categories.
- Students want to be challenged.
- Students want to succeed.

Their perspectives were echoed by students in attendance.

The second portion of the program revolved around a preceptor’s vision for a successful clinical externship provided by Sharon



Joshua Huppert, BFA, AuD Student, president, Student Academy of Audiology (SAA) 2016–2017.

Sandridge, PhD, director of clinical services at Cleveland Clinic. Dr. Sandridge emphasized that the student experience should be as enlightening and informative as possible. The audiologists at Cleveland Clinic are serious about the students they are educating and training. As with patient treatment, the audiologists are caring and want to do all they can to change a person’s life by



Left to Right: Madison Saunders, AuD, member of National Student Speech Language and Hearing Association (NSSLHA) 2016–2017; and Patricia Gaffney, AuD, associate professor, Nova Southeastern University, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

providing solutions for an individual's hearing health. With students, the goal is the same and the highlight is to educate them about exceptional clinical practices in audiology, using preceptors that are well prepared and trained.

The third-hour reviewed a different perspective about students engaged in their fourth-year externship. Marshall Hill, PhD, executive director of State Authorization Recognition Agreements (SARA) gave an overview of SARA and informed the audience that licensed professions (which includes all health professions) must comprehend current state regulations and their potential consequences related to any student's out-of-state externship. As noted after the session by Dr. DeRuiter, "it is possible that a student's future licensure could be at risk (depending on the state) should a state board discover that the home program did not comply with state regulations and procedures when placing a student across state lines."

As a result of Dr. Hill's remarks, there was consensus among participants that immediate steps be taken

to develop an action plan about this matter. They suggested that the National Council of State Boards of Examiners in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology (NCSB), CAPCSD, the Academy, ASHA, and ACAE form a task force or ad-hoc committee to collect data regarding NCSB requirements for out-of-state student placements both now and in the future. Plans are underway to proceed and Alison Lemke, chair of NCSB agreed to work with the groups noted to collect the data.

The morning's activities concluded with the attendees participating in one of nine interactive table discussions. Below are 10 evidence-based highlights that were mentioned underscoring success in an externship:

- Communicate clearly about the expectations for an externship between student and university and student and clinical site.
- Remember the extern is still a student.
- Create a positive environment.
- Provide daily feedback (if possible) and scheduled evaluations.

- Develop a handbook and common forms for externship.
- Facilitate growth in the development of the whole person.
- Prepare students for entry-level practice across the scope of audiology.
- Encourage preceptor training.
- Encourage students to be active in the profession.
- Encourage life-long learning.

Dr. Gail Whitelaw summarized the morning by highlighting the need for consistency in the immersion experience. Student input in this session provided a strong perspective of addressing needs for the externship. The model presented at the Cleveland Clinic addresses many of the critical needs from a site perspective. Preceptor education, through the Certificate Holder–Audiology Preceptor (CH-AP) program offered by the American Board of Audiology (ABA) and through member programs of CAPCSD provides a unique opportunity to enhance the preceptor-student-university triad experience and offers this type of formal clinical education for the first time in the history of audiology. Dr. Whitelaw also emphasized the need for the development of an action plan regarding issues related to SARA.

The plan is to continue the Clinical Education Forum on an annual basis during AudiologyNOW! and to always include the student perspective.

Many thanks go to Joshua Huppert, Madison Saunders, Dr. Mark DeRuiter, Dr. Sharon Sandridge, Dr. Gail Whitelaw, Dr. Lisa Hunter, Dr. Ann Eddins, and to Dr. Marshall Hill for their excellent contributions to the program. 

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