



# SPEAKER GUIDE

All speaker credentials, bios, and disclosures are listed alphabetically by last name.

## **General Speaker Disclosure:**

Apraxia Kids provided compensation to all speakers in the form of a discounted conference registration fee.

### **Mikey Akers, Lived Experience**

🏠 **England, United Kingdom**

Mikey (24) has been raising awareness and supporting families with a diagnosis of Childhood Apraxia of Speech on his social media platforms for the last 13 years. Sharing all aspects of his lived experience gives families a great insight into how it feels growing up and living with CAS. He works closely with his local Member of Parliament and the UK Government to gain more investment in speech and language services. Mikey is a member of the Apraxia Kids Junior Board, alongside founding his own charity, Mikey's Wish Foundation.

***Disclosures:** Founder of Mikey's Wish Foundation. Member of Apraxia Kids Junior Board. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### **Kristen Allison, PhD, CCC-SLP**

🏠 **Massachusetts, United States**

Kristen Allison, PhD, CCC-SLP is an assistant professor and director of the Speech Motor Impairment and Learning (SMILe) Lab at Northeastern University. Her research focuses on improving assessment and treatment of pediatric motor speech disorders with a particular focus on dysarthria.

***Disclosures:** Co-author of the ProCAD, which will be discussed in this speaker's presentation. Receive grant funding from the NIH for a project focused on norming and validating the ProCAD. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### **Matheus Alpes, PhD**

🏠 **Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

Matheus Alpes is a speech therapist with master and doctor degrees in Sciences and a PhD in speech therapy. Matheus is also a professor at Fluminense Federal University and Chief of TMF-LAB (Research Group in children motor speech disorders).

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Alicia Alverson, MS, CCC-SLP, ATP

### 🏠 Oregon, United States

Alicia Alverson is a speech-language therapist with expertise in alternative access and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Pulling from work in adapting general education curricula for students with complex bodies and modifying AAC vocabularies for people using auditory scanning, Alicia brings a holistic and person-centered approach to communication access. She is passionate about promoting agency, autonomy, and meaningful participation through assistive technology integration. Alicia is also a co-guardian for an individual who uses AAC, which informs her empathetic and advocacy-driven practice. Outside of and separate from her work at Smartbox, she operates a small private practice focused on empowering individuals with their AAC/AT systems and supporting their families.

***Disclosures:** Full-time salary from Smartbox Assistive Technology, Inc. Operate small private practice focused on AAC implementation and training Member of ASHA, RESNA, ISAAC, USSAAC, co-guardian of an individual who uses an SGD. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Shelby Anumandla, MS, CF-SLP

### 🏠 Wisconsin, United States

Shelby Anumandla is a bilingual Speech-Language Pathologist working for Children's Wisconsin. She also works in the Communication, Movement, Learning Lab under the direction of Dr. Jenya Iuzzini-Seigel at Marquette University on a number of projects studying treatment for Childhood Apraxia of Speech. Shelby has a passion for working with diverse populations and for better understanding how to assess and treat such populations.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Marly Asad, BSpPath. CPSP.

### 🏠 New South Wales, Australia

Marly Asad is a speech pathologist who works with children with childhood apraxia of speech and other communication needs at Remarkable Speech and Movement, a private practice in Sydney, Australia.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Joseph Ashenden, SLPD, CCC-SLP

### 🏠 Pennsylvania, United States

Joseph Ashenden, SLPD, CCC-SLP is an assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh. Ashenden joined the University from Pittsburgh Public schools, where he served as a speech-language pathologist for students grades K-12. His clinical and research interests include educational speech-language pathology and teaching and learning in the field of CSD.

***Disclosures:** Receives salary from the University of Pittsburgh. Cochair of Schools Committee, PSHA. Member, Scientific and Professional Education board, ASHA. Member, Academic Affairs Committee, CAPCSD. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Molly Beiting, PhD, CCC-SLP

### 🏠 North Carolina, United States

Molly Beiting, PhD, CCC-SLP is an Assistant Professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. At UNC-CH, she teaches graduate level coursework including Pediatric Speech Sound Disorders. Dr. Beiting's research focuses on optimizing assessment and treatment for children with CAS and other speech disorders, with special interests in telepractice, autism, and treatment for older children. Dr. Beiting is also a certified speech-language pathologist with over 12 years of experience, primarily in the schools and private practice. She is proud to be an Apraxia Kids Professional Advisory Board Member and a Boot Camp Instructor. Dr. Beiting loves collaborating on research with families and clinicians, so please reach out if that is something that interests you!

***Disclosures:** Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. Instructor for Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Ana Bertolino, SLP

### 🏠 Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Ana Bertolino is a Speech-Language Pathologist in Brazil. After graduating in Speech-Language Pathology from UFMG (Federal University of Minas Gerais), Ana continued her training with advanced training in DTTC with Dr. Edythe Strand, training in ReST methods, and is PROMPT Level 2 trained. Ana is also a professor of postgraduate courses in subjects related to speech sound disorders.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Alonna Bondar, MS, CCC-SLP

### 🏠 New York, United States

Alonna Bondar, MS, CCC-SLP is PROMPT certified and DTTC trained, and listed on the Apraxia Kids SLP Directory. Alonna is a pediatric speech language pathologist with 25 years of experience specializing in apraxia and other speech sound disorders. Alonna enjoys working with children with various diagnoses, especially those with down syndrome and autism.

Early on in her career as speech language pathologist, there were some children that were not making adequate progress utilizing a language based therapy approach. She began researching other treatment methods and realized that childhood apraxia of speech was the underlying issue. Therefore, these children needed a motor based speech approach.

Over the years Alonna has worked with countless clients with CAS and trained dozens of SLPs. It became apparent that it was difficult for therapists to find a course that is easy to understand, engaging, and fully prepares them to work with CAS clients.

Alonna is passionate about CAS education and aims to make the information around CAS easy to understand and implement, so you can start working with CAS clients immediately.

***Disclosures:** CEO and Owner of Bondar Speech Private Practice. Receives compensation from this online apraxia course and all the courses and resources listed on bondarspeech.com. Receives small commissions from affiliate links in Amazon storefront. PROMPT certified and listed on the PROMPT directory. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Anthony Boytim, Dad of a Child with CAS, Co-Founder of Star Supporters group

### Ohio, United States

Anthony Boytim is from Cleveland, Ohio. He is a high school math teacher and is a father to three young children, including one that has apraxia. After attending two conferences, Anthony and his wife, Chelsea, started up Star Supporters with Amy Salera, a monthly virtual meetup for caregivers and SLPs of children with Apraxia.

*Disclosures: Parent Co-Leader of Star Supporters group for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Chelsea Boytim, Mom of a Child with CAS, Co-Founder of Star Supporters group

### Ohio, United States

Chelsea Boytim has been the Cleveland Walk for Apraxia Coordinator for the past three years. Along with her husband, Anthony, she founded Star Supporters, a monthly virtual parent / caregiver support group by Apraxia Kids. She is a tireless advocate for children with CAS and stays very involved within the Apraxia Kids community. Chelsea lives in Cleveland, Ohio with her husband and three kids Norah, Delaney, and Wesley. Her daughter Delaney got diagnosed with CAS when she just turned 3 years old in 2022. Finding Apraxia Kids was life changing for her family and she's excited to create genuine connections and help other families within the Apraxia community during her time on the Board.

*Disclosures: Board Member for Apraxia Kids. Parent Co-Leader of Star Supporters group for Apraxia Kids. Coordinator for the Walk for Apraxia. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Madison Brumbaugh, MS, CCC-SLP

### Washington DC, United States

Madison L. Brumbaugh, MS, CCC-SLP, is a speech-language pathologist who specializes in serving pediatric and adult clients with complex communication needs. Madison is licensed to practice speech-language pathology in Washington, DC, Maryland, and Virginia, and she has worked in a variety of settings, including private practice, home healthcare, and public school settings, since beginning her career in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Madison graduated from Georgia State University with master's degrees in Educational Research and Communication Sciences and Disorders and is currently pursuing a PhD in Translational Health Sciences at the George Washington University. She is an alumna of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Leadership Mentoring Program and current mentor, and she volunteers as both an ASHA Grasstops Envoy and ASHA State Education Advocacy Leader.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Aleah Cabral, Parent of Apraxia Star, RPN, OCT, B.Ed

### Ontario, Canada

Aleah is a Registered Practical Nurse, educator, and mom of three who is deeply committed to supporting families navigating Childhood Apraxia of Speech and other communication challenges. Her work is shaped by both her clinical background and lived parenting experience. She takes a family-centred, nervous system informed approach, emphasizing emotional safety, connection, and

caregiver well-being. Aleah is passionate about empowering parents with practical tools and confidence so they can advocate for their children without fear or overwhelm. She values collaboration, storytelling, and honest conversation, and believes parents voices belong alongside professionals. At this conference, Aleah is honoured to co-facilitate a parent-led session rooted in lived experience, resilience, and hope.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Sarah Carmody, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

#### New Jersey, United States

Sarah Carmody is a multilingual pediatric SLP who owns a small private practice in southern New Jersey and serves as an adjunct faculty member at Widener University in Pennsylvania. She has a background in broad pediatric service delivery within the medical setting, having served in large hospital systems for several years and worked extensively with multilingual children and families across the outpatient, private, and school setting. Through her private practice, she now specializes in assessment and treatment of complex speech production difficulties and motor speech disorders. Sarah has a passion for teaching, and enjoys advancing the knowledge of SLPs, other professionals, and family/community members as it pertains to supporting individuals with CAS across the lifespan. Sarah is a proud graduate of the Apraxia Kids Intensive Training Institute ("Boot Camp") and has served on the instructional team for Boot Camp for the 2023 and 2025 cohorts. She is also a member of the Apraxia Kids Professional Advisory Council.

*Disclosures: Owner of Carmody Development Center. Paid employee at Widener University. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. Instructor for Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Carolyn Carnes, Parent of a Child with Apraxia

#### Illinois, United States

Carolyn Carnes is a Lutheran pastor and parent of a child with childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). She lives with her family in Galesburg, Illinois, a rural Midwestern community where access to specialized pediatric services can be limited. Like many families, Carolyn knows firsthand the challenge of juggling multiple roles-parenting, full-time work, community commitments, and caring for more than one child-while navigating therapy and school systems. Carolyn and her family enjoy camping, reading, and hiking together.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Scott Carnes, Parent of a Child with Apraxia

#### Illinois, United States

Scott Carnes is the father of a child with severe Childhood Apraxia of Speech. Before his son was two years old, it was clear that speech development was significantly delayed. While early intervention provided some support, progress was slow and a clear diagnosis was difficult to obtain. It was only after suspecting apraxia and connecting with a specialist - through hours each week of online therapy - that his family began to see meaningful change.

Living in Galesburg, Illinois, Scott and his wife have navigated the ongoing realities of parenting a child with complex communication needs: advocating within school systems, coordinating intensive therapy, and carrying the constant worries many caregivers know well. He worries about his son forming close friendships and about how much harder things may become as he grows older, not to mention worrying about his toddler getting lost in public and not able to communicate. At the same time, Scott speaks with deep admiration for his son's determination. Even at four and five years old, his son works tirelessly through speech therapy each week. He understands his differences but doesn't let himself get discouraged. Watching that persistence has been humbling and transformative. One of the greatest joys of his life came when his son, just shy of five, clearly said, "I love you" - a moment that continues to shape his hope.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Alita-Geri Carter, MSN, DNP(c), RN, CPNP-PC, BCPA

#### Maryland, United States

Alita-Geri Carter, DNP(c), APRN, CPNP, is a nationally recognized disability rights advocate, pediatric healthcare professional, and public health leader with more than 16 years of experience advancing equity, access, and accountability across healthcare and education systems. She is a board-certified pediatric nurse practitioner and patient advocate whose career bridges direct clinical care, public health program management, health policy, and legislative advocacy.

Dr. Carter's work centers on the intersection of disability rights, special education law, and pediatric health outcomes. She has extensive expertise navigating and addressing systemic failures related to IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, with a particular focus on children with neurodevelopmental, communication, and complex medical needs. Her advocacy is informed by both professional training and lived experience, grounding her work in trauma-informed, family-centered, and evidence-based approaches.

In federal service, Dr. Carter has managed multimillion-dollar public health portfolios, led quality improvement initiatives, and supported nationwide healthcare delivery systems serving underserved pediatric populations. She has been instrumental in stakeholder engagement, compliance oversight, and program evaluation, ensuring that policies translate into meaningful outcomes for children and families.

Beyond her professional roles, Dr. Carter has successfully led state-level legislative efforts resulting in expanded access to special education advocacy resources for families with limited incomes. Her leadership has been recognized through multiple local, state, and national awards for healthcare innovation, equity, and disability advocacy.

Dr. Carter remains committed to dismantling structural barriers, amplifying family voices, and advancing systems that uphold the civil and human rights of children with disabilities.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Julie Case, PhD, CCC-SLP

#### Connecticut, United States

Julie Case is an Associate Professor in the Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences Department at Hofstra University. Dr. Case is an ASHA certified speech language pathologist with specialization in speech sound disorders and expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS). She is the director of the Case Speech Production Laboratory which studies the clinical management of CAS, in addition to speech motor development in monolingual and bilingual children.

**Disclosures:** Salaried employee at Hofstra University. Receives grant funding the NIH, Once Upon a Time Foundation, and the ASH Foundation. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Susan Caspari, MA, CCC-SLP

#### Pennsylvania, United States

Sue Caspari is a speech-language pathologist and faculty member at Temple University. Sue has over 20 years of experience working with children and adults in a variety of settings including early intervention, private practice, and inpatient and outpatient hospital settings, including the Mayo Clinic. Sue has advanced training in and is nationally recognized for her expertise with respect to childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). At Temple, she teaches graduate level courses focused on speech sound disorders including CAS, and supervises the clinical work of students in the recently established Childhood Apraxia of Speech Treatment, Learning and Evaluation (CASTLE) Center. She frequently gives national and international presentations on the clinical management of CAS, and has published scientific research in top journals since 2008. Sue is a professional advisory council member for the Apraxia Kids organization, an instructor for the Apraxia Kid's intensive CAS training institute, and is the owner of Caspari and Colleagues, LLC, which is dedicated to providing services to children with CAS and their families.

**Disclosures:** Owner of Caspari and Colleagues, LLC. Salaried faculty member at Temple University. Co-investigator with Edwin Maas on an NIH-funded research study. Instructor for Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. Member of the Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. Donated training videos for the Dynamic Evaluation of Motor Speech Skill (DEMSS). There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Robert Cavanaugh, PhD, CCC-SLP

#### Maine, United States

Robert Cavanaugh is an Assistant Professor of Quantitative Methods at the Massachusetts General Hospital Institute for Health Professions, serving as a statistician, consultant, and mentor for student and faculty research initiatives. He teaches doctoral coursework in statistics and reproducible research in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. His current research integrates rehabilitation health services, population health, and data science, analyzing insurance claims and electronic health record data to examine healthcare outcomes and improve service delivery in aphasia and related disorders.

**Disclosures:** Receives salary from MGH Institute of Health Professions and funding from the Once Upon a Time Foundation. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Heera Chandani, Multilingual SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

#### Illinois, United States

Heera Chandani is a multilingual speech-language pathologist, with close to 20 years of experience working with children and adults globally, in a variety of settings including therapeutic/public/private schools, private clinics, home health, and inpatient hospital settings. She specializes in assessment and treatment of individuals with complex communication needs, including autism and childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). Heera owns a private practice in

Skokie/Chicago and has served as adjunct faculty member at Northwestern University. She has advanced training in PROMPT and is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Clinical Expertise in CAS. Heera is committed to serving her clients/families from a functional and cognitive lens, working simultaneously on the child's self-advocacy and executive functioning skills. She loves to see it all come together when facilitating her social pragmatic groups. As a sibling caregiver herself, Heera is committed to supporting apraxia stars and their families globally to further awareness about CAS, while empowering them with the resources and support that she wishes she had in her journey with her brother.

***Disclosures:** CEO/Owner of Chandani & Burns, LLC. Adjunct Clinical Assistant Professor at Northwestern University. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Line Charron, Master in Speech and Language Therapy, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

#### Québec, Canada

Line Charron is a recognized French-speaking trainer specializing in childhood apraxia of speech in Quebec, as well as in France, Switzerland, and Belgium. With over 37 years of experience working with pediatric clients, she currently operates in private practice after having work many years at rehabilitation center (IRDPO), where she focused on children with severe speech sound disorders (SSD), particularly childhood apraxia of speech (CAS).

In addition to her practice, Line teaches and collaborates with Université Laval and Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières as part of their master's program in speech-language pathology. Since 2006, she has dedicated herself to enhancing her expertise in verbal dyspraxia, closely working with children diagnosed with childhood apraxia of speech (CAS), and participating in numerous training courses in the United States with leading researchers in the field.

Line was certified for advanced training and clinical expertise in childhood apraxia of speech in 2011. In October 2023, she was selected for advanced training in Dynamic Temporal and Tactile Cueing (DTTC).

***Disclosures:** Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Amy Clark, MS, CCC-SLP, PI

#### Minnesota, United States

Amy is the Director of Clinical Education for the PROMPT Institute and a treatment clinician at Children's Minnesota. She has over 25 years of direct clinical practice experience working in schools, hospitals, and private practice. She is a member of the Apraxia Kids Professional Advisory Council and a nationally recognized speaker on subjects related to motor speech disorders and PROMPT.

***Disclosures:** Director of Clinical Education for the PROMPT Institute and receives compensation for this role. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Fabiana Collavini Cunha, Co-Founder, Board Member, and President of Abrapraxia

### Brazil

Fabiana is a business administrator, one of the founders and President of the Brazilian Association of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (ABRAPRAXIA) since 2014. She is a mother of two, Marco and Ana Beatriz, a lovely girl with CAS.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Shina Cook, CCC-SLP

### Pennsylvania, United States

Shina Cook is a PhD student in Communication Sciences and Disorders at Temple University as well as a licensed speech-language pathologist. Her research interests focus on the emotional, behavioral, and cognitive experiences of individuals with childhood apraxia of speech (CAS), and how understanding these experiences can holistically improve treatment.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Elina Csapo, Lived Experience

### New Jersey, United Kingdom

Elina is a 19-year-old sophomore at Rider University in New Jersey, studying Management and Global Supply Chain. She spent her second year studying abroad at Oxford University in the United Kingdom. At Rider, she is a dedicated member of the Gail Bierenbaum Leadership Council, the Business Honors Program, and the Baccalaureate Honors Program, and the student supervisors at the information of technology department at Rider.

Diagnosed with Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) at age four, Elina transformed her personal challenges into a platform for advocacy and empowerment. She is the founder of Young Able Voices, a peer-to-peer support group that helps individuals with speech and communication differences find confidence and community. Her commitment to inclusion has led her to host the Gender Equity Matters and Hidden Disability Summits, speak at the Apraxia Kids National Conference for three consecutive years, and present at schools and conferences nationwide.

Elina has delivered a TEDx talk and co-authored four published research papers within the past two years. Adopted from Khabarovsk, Russia, she brings a global and compassionate perspective to all she does.

*Disclosures: Founder of Young Able Voices. Member of Apraxia Kids Junior Board. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Hannah Deschaine, MS, CCC-SLP

### New York, United States

Hannah is an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist with special interest in CAS. She received her MS in Communicative Sciences and Disorders from New York University. She is a treating clinician in the New York University Motor Speech Lab on a study examining caregiver involvement in the treatment of CAS using DTTC.

*Disclosures: Paid research clinician on study funded by Once Upon a Time Foundation. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Gabriela Alejandra Drozina, Licenciada Fonoaudióloga

### Buenos Aires, Argentina

Gabriela Drozina, a Speech-Language Pathologist based in Argentina, graduated from the University of Buenos Aires in 2005. She specializes in speech sound disorders, with a particular focus on Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS), integrating linguistic and neuromotor perspectives in clinical practice. She is the founder of an interdisciplinary clinical center and is currently developing the Instituto Fonoaudiológico Gabriela Drozina, a project that integrates specialized therapy, professional training, and clinical research. She also created the Apraxiasol program, focused on intervention and support for children with CAS and their families. Her work centers on the implementation and dissemination of evidence-based motor speech interventions, particularly Dynamic Temporal and Tactile Cueing (DTTC), within Spanish-speaking contexts. She has also received training in Montessori pedagogy, which informs her naturalistic, child-centered approach to intervention. Recently, she designed and led an intensive summer camp program for children with CAS in Argentina, working with 18 participants using a DTTC-based approach in a naturalistic, play-based setting. This initiative included a pre-experimental analysis to document changes in speech outcomes following intensive intervention. Gabriela is committed to expanding access to effective CAS intervention in Latin America and to bridging the gap between research and clinical practice in culturally and linguistically relevant contexts.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Peggy Earnest, PhD, CCC-SLP

### Connecticut, United States

Peggy is a pediatric SLP and owner of Columbia Motor Speech Therapy, a private practice in Eastern Connecticut. Peggy has been in private practice since 2002 and is passionate about treating children and young adults with motor speech disorders, including CAS and dysarthria of speech. She is also an adjunct professor at the University of Connecticut and has authored a handful of children's books and young readers. These include a young adult novel entitled "Nonverbal" and a set of young picture readers (MESS Books) for children who are just beginning to develop motor speech skills.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## José Márcio Ramos Fernandes, Co-Founder, Board Member, and Research Director for Abrapraxia

### Curitiba, Brazil

José Márcio Ramos Fernandes is a founding member and currently serves as Head of Research and Development of ABRAPRAXIA – the Brazilian Association for Childhood Apraxia of Speech, a nonprofit organization established in 2015 by families, for families. He holds a master's degree and has played a central role in strengthening ABRAPRAXIA's research agenda and institutional development. In his role as Head of R&D, José Márcio has led and coordinated high-impact research initiatives, including large-scale genetic studies on Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) conducted in collaboration with Brazilian universities and multidisciplinary clinical teams. His work has contributed to expanding scientific knowledge on the etiology of CAS, supporting evidence-based practices, and fostering dialogue between researchers, clinicians, and families. Beyond research leadership, he has been actively involved in organizational governance, strategic planning, and the development of educational and training programs. ABRAPRAXIA currently

operates nationwide in Brazil, has organized 10 national conferences, trained tens of thousands of professionals and family members, published educational materials and books, and maintains a strong presence in research, education, and family support. His work is guided by ABRAPRAXIA's mission to promote actions that enable individuals with Childhood Apraxia of Speech to reach their full potential.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Wiebke Freese, Speech Pathologist, MSc

🏠 Luebeck, Germany

Wiebke Freese is a speech pathologist with 8 years of experience working with children, also including children with CAS. She is doing her PhD at the University of Luebeck, Germany, about identification and differential diagnosis of children with speech sound disorders. Additionally, she is working as an Honorary Lecturer at the University of Luebeck and University of Applied Sciences Rostock.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Livia Gerber, Speech and Language Pathologist

🏠 New South Wales, Australia

Livia Gerber is a speech pathologist who works at Remarkable Speech and Movement in Sydney, Australia. She predominantly works with school-aged children with CAS and is passionate about supporting them to achieve their goals.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Amanda Grabiner, CCC-SLP, ATP

🏠 Oregon, United States

Amanda Grabiner is a dedicated Speech Language Pathologist and Assistive Technology Professional. With a passion for enhancing communication and quality of life, Amanda has devoted her career to working closely with individuals using Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) across the lifespan and in a variety of settings, including hospitals, schools, clinics, and at home. Currently employed by Smartbox, Inc., Amanda employs a compassionate and client-centered approach, fostering connection, and empowering individuals to reach their communication goals.

*Disclosures: Receives salary from Smartbox Assistive Technology, Inc. Member of ASHA and ASHA Sig 12. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Maria Grigos, PhD, CCC-SLP, ASHA Fellow

🏠 New York, United States

Dr. Maria Grigos is a Professor in the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at New York University. Dr. Grigos also directs the Motor Speech Lab at NYU. Her scholarly work combines the use of perceptual, acoustic and kinematic methods to pursue two lines of research. The first centers on the study of speech motor control and motor learning across the lifespan. The second focuses on translational research where she studies the efficacy of motor-based intervention in childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). This work has been funded by the National

Institute of Health and several private foundations. Dr. Grigos holds clinical certification from the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association, and is licensed in speech-language pathology in New York State. She is a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

**Disclosures:** *Salaried faculty member at New York University. Research funding through NIH (NIH R01DC018581) and the Once Upon a Time Foundation. Receive honoraria from the Once Upon a Time Foundation for workshops on the assessment and treatment of CAS. ASHA Fellow. Member of Professional Advisory Council, and the Liaison to Board of Directors for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### **Aubrie Hagopian, MA, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech**

#### **🏠 California, United States**

Aubrie Hagopian is a pediatric motor speech therapist in Central California. She graduated with her masters degree from Fresno State in 2010. She is the co-author of "Using randomized variable practice in the treatment of childhood apraxia of speech" and is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Clinical Expertise in childhood apraxia of speech. Aubrie enjoys presenting to parents and professionals on various topics related to pediatric speech sound disorders and finds collaboration to be the highlight of her time at the Apraxia Kids conference.

**Disclosures:** *Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### **Emily Hathaway, MS, CCC-SLP**

#### **🏠 Oklahoma, United States**

Emily Hathaway MS, CCC-SLP has been practicing speech-language pathology for 20 years. She has a Masters of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of Oklahoma. Emily loves working with the pediatric population. She completed her clinical fellowship at The Children's Center in 2007 and then enjoyed 5 years with Western Heights Public Schools. While working in the public school setting, Emily worked part-time for a private practice in Southwest OKC, where she found her passion for pediatric outpatient therapy.

Emily started her own private practice in 2010, while continuing her work in the public schools. In 2012, she took the plunge and committed to her private practice full time. Working in a pediatric clinic, she specializes in childhood apraxia of speech, early childhood language, literacy, autism spectrum disorder, articulation, and pragmatic deficits. Emily is passionate about early identification and early intervention for speech/language disorders. She also loves social groups and intense speech camps. Emily is a member of OSHA where she served as the private practice committee chair and the budget and finance committee chair as well as a member of ASHA.

Emily enjoys attending continuing education conferences and loves learning and improving her clinical skills. She also enjoys building LEGO sets, watching movies, spending time with her husband and four children, and they love all things Disney!

**Disclosures:** *Private Practice owner. Sponsor of Apraxia Kids National Conference. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Michelle Heertje, Parent of Apraxia Star, BA in Social Work

### 🏠 Washington, United States

Michelle Heertje is a mom to 3 wonderful boys. Her middle child has a diagnosis of Apraxia of Speech. Michelle is a Social Worker from profession and a passionate Parent Leader Advocate. Through personal life and professional work experiences, she is well rounded and knowledgeable on systems, recourses, and policy. Michelle grew up in the Netherlands near Amsterdam and is currently living in Washington state with her family. Childhood Apraxia of Speech has influenced her middle son in many ways and their family life. Michelle is excited to share some of her journey with the audience and support other parents, SLPs and Researchers on their path.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Jill Hess, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### 🏠 Colorado, United States

Jill is a qualified Speech-Language Pathologist with 25 years of experience using evidence-based and family-centered therapy. Jill attended Arizona State University and received a B.S. degree in Speech and Hearing Science in 1998. She completed her M.S. degree in 2000 at Loyola University Maryland. Since 2000, Jill has worked in a variety of settings including early intervention, home care, and private practice. Jill has owned her own private practice since 2006 where she successfully evaluates and treats a variety of speech and language delays and disorders, but has a passion and love for early intervention as well as treating Speech Sound Disorders, specifically Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS). Jill is listed on the Apraxia Kids directory of SLPs and as a graduate of Apraxia Boot Camp, is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech. Jill also has training and experience in oral-motor/feeding disorders as well as AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication). Jill and her husband moved to Colorado in 2006 and have enjoyed raising two children in this great state and community. When not working, Jill loves to exercise, hike, travel, and hang out with family and friends.

*Disclosures: Owner of Connect the Tots Speech Therapy. Independent Contractor with Developmental Pathways. Member of ASHA. Member of CSHA. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. PROMPT trained. Co-coordinator of the Denver Apraxia Kids Walk 2024 & 2025. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Anne Hodits, MA, CCC-SLP/L, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### 🏠 Illinois, United States

Anne is a devoted speech-language pathologist (SLP) and owner of Strive to Thrive Therapy, LLC in Arlington Heights, IL. She has over 16 years of experience in the field. Anne believes in making therapy engaging, fun, and meaningful. Many families have said that she just "gets" their child; a testament to her ability to build rapport and trust with her clients. Anne goes above and beyond as a practitioner consulting with parents, teachers, school speech therapists, pediatricians, and other providers to ensure that her clients receive the most quality treatment. She attends her clients' IEP meetings, visits their workplaces, and works hard to bridge the gap between the therapy room and the real world. Anne has pursued extensive training in Childhood Apraxia of Speech, leading to her formal recognition as an apraxia specialist from the Apraxia Kids organization. She is a graduate of

the Apraxia Kids "Apraxia Boot Camp", an intensive training program designed to train and advance the clinical expertise of selected speech therapists in the diagnosis and treatment of childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). Anne has presented at many Apraxia Kids Conferences and at the Illinois Speech and Hearing Association Conference. Anne has also been presented with an ACE Award from the national American Speech-LanguageHearing Association (ASHA) for her dedication to professional learning. When she is not working, Anne values the time she gets to spend with family and friends, especially her husband, young son, and beagle. She loves to work out, run, and explore Chicago!

*Disclosures: Owner of Strive to Thrive Therapy, LLC. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Jenya Iuzzini-Seigel, PhD, CCC-SLP

#### Wisconsin, United States

Dr. Iuzzini-Seigel is Associate Professor and Director of the Communication, Movement and Learning Lab at Marquette University. Her research takes a "care of the whole child" approach as she investigates assessment and treatment of children with communication disorders and motor speech disorders specifically. She has enjoyed her recent collaborations with community clinicians throughout the country and looks forward to continuing this in future projects!

*Disclosures: Co-author of the ProCAD. Salaried employee at Marquette University. Paid to speak and consult on CAS and related topics across the world. Has research funded by NIH and Once Upon a Time Foundation. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Dora Knežević, PhD

#### Grad Zagreb, Croatia

Dora Knežević is a speech and language pathologist and postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Speech and Language Pathology at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences. She earned her PhD with a focus on motor speech disorders, particularly childhood apraxia of speech. Her research interests include motor speech and speech sound disorders in the paediatric population, and she teaches undergraduate and postgraduate courses. She also provides clinical services within the SLP unit at the Centre for Rehabilitation, the Faculty's teaching and clinical unit. Dora is active in national and international professional associations and currently serves as Vice President for Communication of the International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics (IALP).

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Nicole Kolenda, MS, CCC-SLP, PC

#### New York, United States

Nicole is a pediatric speech-language pathologist with 25 years of clinical experience. She is a motor speech specialist and an adjunct professor at the Department of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at New York University. Nicole serves as the Lead Speech-Language Pathologist for a Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) treatment study at the NYU Motor Speech Lab, a project funded by the National Institute of Health. Her clinical expertise includes comprehensive

assessment, differential diagnosis, and individualized treatment planning for children with complex motor speech needs.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Olga Komadina, Bachelor of Health Science (Speech Pathology), CPSP

#### **Albury-Wodonga, Australia**

Olga Komadina is an Australian paediatric speech-language pathologist with over 21 years of experience, specialising in Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS), autism, and complex communication needs. Based in Albury-Wodonga, Australia, Olga operates a neuroaffirming, family-centred private practice supporting children with severe motor speech disorders, minimally verbal communication profiles, and diverse developmental presentations.

Olga's background includes 15 years working within one of the largest autism-specific service providers in the world, giving her a unique depth of experience at the intersection of autism and motor speech disorders. Early in her career, she trained in a CAS-only clinic, receiving 1:1, case-based mentoring from David Hammer, then Director of Professional Development at Apraxia Kids. These experiences shaped her specialised clinical focus in both CAS and autism.

Olga has developed several original clinical frameworks, including a CAS Triage System for differential diagnosis and a practical syllable-based method for selecting functional target words. She also creates functional, high-frequency CAS picture card resources organised by syllable shape and is currently translating both her Apraxia Handbook and therapy resources into Serbian/Croatian to support families and clinicians in the Balkan region.

In addition to clinical practice, Olga provides mentoring, supervision, and whole-clinic CAS training to speech pathology teams across Australia and leads a structured 6-month CAS mentoring program for clinicians. She has been invited as a podcast guest and regularly contributes to professional development communities in Australia and internationally. Olga is passionate about making high-quality, evidence-aligned CAS support accessible, neuroaffirming, culturally responsive, and easy for families and clinicians to understand.

*Disclosures: Author of OKAT Apraxia CAS Therapy Handbook, presentation may reference concepts that also appear in author's written materials. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Lou LaVecchia, Prior Speaker, Parent of Apraxia Star, Apraxia Kids Board Member

#### **Connecticut, United States**

Lou LaVecchia is a parent of child with CAS who has successfully advocated for an IEP that has proven successful. He has been self-taught on the laws and rights that all parents with special needs are entitled too in the PPT / IEP process. Lou has a proven record of working with his school district to improve the appropriate services for children in need of speech services. Lou achieved a Bachelor of Science in Business Management and Organization from the University of Central Connecticut. He currently is the owner / vice president of All Seasons Landscaping Inc. (ASL) a construction company located in Connecticut. His strongest attributes are negotiating and organizational skills.

*Disclosures: Apraxia Kids Board Member. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Meghan Littlejohn, PhD Candidate

### 🏠 Pennsylvania, United States

Meghan Littlejohn is a doctoral candidate with the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Temple University. Her research with the Speech, Language, and Brain Lab focuses on leveraging the underlying speech and language system to improve diagnosis and treatment of CAS. Meghan's work is informed by five years of experience with preschool special education and per diem work with school-age special education and adult home care.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Josh Lowe, Lived Experience

### 🏠 West Midlands, United Kingdom

Josh has been friends with Mikey Akers (founder of the Mikeys Wish Foundation) for 13 years, and in that time Josh learnt all about Apraxia and how Mikey has overcome different challenges through life. Josh and Mikey have previously presented at 2 conferences about our friendship, and are here again to share their experience. Throughout the years Josh has always tried to support and help Mikey when he's done events and they have always been great to be involved with.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Lauren Lozneau, MS, CCC-SLP

### 🏠 Illinois, United States

Lauren is a speech-language pathologist at Strive to Thrive Therapy, PLLC who specializes in the evaluation and treatment of children with childhood apraxia of speech. She has pursued additional training in childhood apraxia of speech, including the Diagnosis and Treatment of CAS Using Dynamic Temporal and Tactile Cueing (DTTC) through the Once Upon a Time Foundation, and Introduction to PROMPT. She has also pursued training in orofacial myology as well as in DIR/DIR Floortime through their introductory course & enjoys implementing this framework in her therapy.

*Disclosures: Paid clinician at Strive to Thrive Therapy, LLC. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Ying Lu, PhD

### 🏠 New York, United States

Dr. Ying Lu is Associate Professor of Applied Statistics at the Department of Applied Statistics, Social Sciences and Humanities at New York University, a Steinhardt School of Cultural, Education and Human Development.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Zhuojun Lyu, PhD student

### 🏠 California, United States

Zhuojun Lyu is a second-year PhD student in the Department of Statistics and Applied Probability at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Zhuojun's research interests include Bayesian causal inference for observational data, methods for handling missing data, and experimental design.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Edwin Maas, PhD

### Pennsylvania, United States

Edwin Maas is clinical researcher and Associate Professor in Communication Sciences and Disorders at Temple University. His translational and clinical research centers on speech disorders, in particular apraxia of speech in children and adults, and has two distinct but related lines motivated by two clinical challenges.

The first research line focuses on how to improve diagnosis of speech disorders, in particular differentiating between apraxia of speech and other speech disorders. This translational research line encompasses studies to characterize the nature of speech disorders in terms of underlying processes and mechanisms, and studies to identify sensitive and objective measures (such as acoustic and reaction time measures) that may differentiate speech disorders (including possible subtypes), and predict treatment response and long-term outcomes (prognosis).

The second research line focuses on improving treatment outcomes for children and adults with speech disorders. This line involves clinical trials research (single-case experimental designs and randomized controlled trials) to (a) determine efficacy, (b) optimize treatment parameters, and (3) identify predictors of treatment response in order to facilitate personalized, optimally targeted intervention.

The long-term goals of this research are to improve diagnostic tools and intervention methods, and thereby improve the communicative quality of life and well-being of individuals with speech disorders.

Edwin has published over 50 peer-reviewed articles, and his research has been funded by NIDCD, Apraxia Kids, and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation.

***Disclosures:** Receives salary from Temple University. Has received grant funding from NIH and Apraxia Kids. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Rebecca MacCallion, B.Mus (voice), MSLP, CPSP

### Australia

Rebecca MacCallion is a senior speech pathologist and researcher. She has over 9 years experience working with children with childhood apraxia of speech, cerebral palsy, hearing impairment, voice disorders, language and speech sound disorders. She has worked as a guest lecturer at Macquarie University and has co-authored treatment research in childhood apraxia of speech. She is an experienced clinical educator and enjoys providing clinical education for other therapists, particularly in the areas of DTTC and ReST treatment.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Caroline Mancuso, MA, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### Colorado, United States

Caroline Mancuso, MA, CCC-SLP is a certified Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) with over 20 years of experience, specializing in the evaluation and treatment of children under the age of three. Serving primarily in the South Denver metro area since 2004, Caroline has built expertise in a variety of areas, including Childhood Apraxia of speech (CAS), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), articulation, phonology, and parent coaching. Her treatment approach integrates evidence-based

practices with a playful and engaging style that incorporates aspects of social-emotional development. She is passionate about early identification and effective, evidence-based treatment of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) and suspected CAS (sCAS), with a strong emphasis on empowering parents through coaching and collaboration. She is a member of the Apraxia Kids SLP Directory and attended and graduated from the intensive training program in August 2025 to further expand her expertise in CAS.

Outside of her professional work, Caroline has a deep curiosity for neurology and human development and enjoys exploring these topics beyond the therapy setting. She is also an avid outdoor enthusiast, enjoying activities like skiing, paddleboarding, and hiking. In her free time, she loves spending time with her family and her dog, and she's always up for a good laugh.

***Disclosures:** Owner of aLINEment Therapy, Inc. Independent contractor with Developmental Pathway. Member of ASHA. Member of CSHA. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. PROMPT trained. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Tricia McCabe, PhD, BAppl(SP), FSPAA, CPSP

🏠 New South Wales, Australia

Professor Tricia McCabe is Professor of Speech Pathology at The University of Sydney, Australia. She is a Certified Practicing Speech Pathologist and Fellow of Speech Pathology Australia.

With her colleagues, Tricia completed the first ever CAS Randomized Control Trial comparing ReST with the Nuffield Dyspraxia Program. She then lead the 10 year project to develop the ReST intervention from first principles through completion of two RCTs and delivery of a website for freely training speech pathologists to deliver the treatment. This work is a world leader in research translation with free resources and training available internationally and an open access tutorial published in Perspectives.

Tricia and an international team have recently completed the first RCT comparing DTTC with usual care. Overall, her team produced one quarter of all papers published on treatments for CAS in the period 2010-2024. Dr McCabe has a career publication record of more than 100 papers and chapters, and she continues clinical practice and mentoring clinicians and students.

When she's not being a speechie, Tricia is the servant of Taffy, a ginger tabby cat and and a house rabbit called Princess Brioche.

***Disclosures:** Paid employee at University of Sydney. Research funded by various sources including Apraxia Kids and the Australian government. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Sheridan McClurg, MS, CCC-SLP

🏠 North Carolina, United States

Sheridan McClurg is an Assistant Professor and Clinical Educator in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, where she supervises graduate students in the school setting. She holds an undergraduate degree in Communication Science Disorders with a minor in Special Education from Appalachian State University (B.S.) and a master's degree from Nova Southeastern. She obtained a graduate certificate from UNC-Charlotte in Autism Spectrum Disorders.

With a background spanning with experiences in private practice, early intervention, and public schools, Sheridan specializes in childhood apraxia of speech. She is listed on the Apraxia Kids SLP Directory and has completed Intensive Training through the Once Upon a Time Foundation and

NYU. Her expertise also extends to Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and general speech sound disorders. Research interest includes family-centered practice, integration of AAC into multiple settings, and language interventions for individuals with Autism. Locally, she serves as the Walk Chair for the annual Triad Walk for Apraxia.

***Disclosures:** Assistant Professor and Clinical Educator at University of North Carolina at Greensboro for which she receives compensation. Apraxia Kids Walk Coordinator for the North Carolina Triad Area. Member of ASHA, NCSHLA, CAPCSD, and NCASSPA. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Tessa McEvoy, Digital Design Major

#### Colorado, United States

Tessa McEvoy is an Apraxic individual who must navigate daily professional and personal challenges. She currently runs a YouTube account titled, "Tony O Tower" where she narrates her love for illustration despite her speech. Tessa also works with Judith from 'Creating Employment for Neurodivergent People' editing, producing, and creating graphics for podcasts episodes. Besides living her best life online, Tessa supports customers with printing their designs at PostNet.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Kerry McNamara, MS, CCC-SLP

#### New York, United States

Kerry is a licensed (NYS) speech-language pathologist and full-time doctoral student in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Syracuse University. She worked as an early intervention and preschool-based SLP for 6+ years before starting her doctorate. She is interested in developing and studying treatments for children with CAS that address speech production while also considering other elements of development (language, phonology, communicative competence, etc.).

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Genevieve Meloni, PhD, CCC-SLP

#### Québec, Canada

Genevieve Meloni is a researcher and clinician specializing in speech development and speech disorders. Trained initially as a speech & language pathologist, she spent nearly ten years working with children presenting speech sound disorders and language disorders. Alongside her clinical practice, she pursued an academic research path, completing a master's degree in linguistics, followed by a Ph.D. and a postdoctoral fellowship. Her research focuses on the cognitive processes underlying spoken communication, with particular attention to how children perceive and produce speech. She is especially interested in the dynamic relationship between speech perception and speech production, exploring how these processes interact during development. Her work also examines the emergence of motor control for speech, especially in children diagnosed with childhood apraxia of speech, seeking to better understand the mechanisms that support their ability to plan speech movements.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Katie Micco, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### Pennsylvania, United States

Katie Micco is a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Speech Production Disorder Clinic at Duquesne University where she supervises graduate students in the evaluation and treatment of children and adults with speech production disorders, as well as teaching the Speech Production Disorders graduate-level course. She has been a practicing speech-language pathologist since 2007 in both the outpatient and educational settings. Her work focuses on the evaluation and treatment of children with speech production disorders including childhood apraxia of speech, structural speech issues and VPI, voice disorders, language disorders, and pragmatic language disorders. Katie has presented at both the local and national levels on the topics of childhood apraxia of speech and other sound disorders, as well as AAC. She is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech.

*Disclosures: Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Kale Miller, Lived Experience

### Ohio, United States

Kale Miller was diagnosed with Childhood Apraxia of Speech in 2005, but through dedication and the support of his family, he has surpassed every expectation. He graduated Cum Laude from Ashland University in Ohio with a double major in Business Marketing and Sport Management, and he now works as a marketing professional. Confident and outgoing, Kale has presented academic work to crowded rooms without hesitation and is known for his energetic, life-of-the-room presence. A child and his family, once scared about the future, knows Kale would not be the person he is today without Childhood Apraxia of Speech and it has fostered an incredible work ethic.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Lisa Mitchell, SLPD, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### New Hampshire, United States

Dr. Mitchell is the co-owner and clinical director of Clearly Speaking, a pediatric private practice with three clinics located throughout the state of New Hampshire. She is an ASHA certified speech language pathologist who has been evaluating and treating children with speech and/or language difficulties for over 20 years.

Over the last fifteen years, Lisa has received extensive training in the area of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS). She specializes in the assessment and treatment of complex speech sound disorders and is passionate about bridging research to practice. Lisa is a clinical educator for Apraxia Kids Intensive Training Institute and a member of Apraxia Kids Professional Advisory Council.

*Disclosures: Co-owner and clinical director of Clearly Speaking. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. Graduate of and Instructor for Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Zhiyue Mo, MS

### Massachusetts, United States

Zhiyue Mo is a statistician and previously worked at New York University. Zhiyue's previous work focused on developing an interactive causal inference tool based on machine learning-powered methods, and contributing to an R01 project estimating the treatment effects of motor-based interventions for childhood apraxia of speech through RCTs, as well as leveraging large-scale EHRs to investigate health disparities across diverse populations. Zhiyue's research aims to advance methodologies for understanding treatment heterogeneity across diverse populations and improving the transportability of clinical trial results to real-world settings. In Zhiyue's time, she enjoys playing tennis, board games, and mahjong.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Selina Moujalli, Bachelor of Speech Pathology

### New South Wales, Australia

Selina Moujalli is a speech pathologist who works at Remarkable Speech and Movement in Sydney, Australia. She has 25 years of experience working with children and now often works with children with CAS including contributing to research projects. She is passionate about supporting children and their families through parent coaching and collaboration with other professionals.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Elizabeth Murray, Speech Pathologist

### New South Wales, Australia

Dr. Elizabeth (Liz) Murray is a speech pathologist, clinician, researcher and sibling of 2 people with childhood apraxia of speech. She owns, directs and works clinically at Remarkable Speech and Movement and is an honorary lecturer at the University of Sydney. She is passionate about improving outcomes for people with CAS including assessment, treatment and advocacy and implementing research into practice.

*Disclosures: Paid employment from Remarkable Speech and Movement. Funding from the Once Upon A Time Foundation and National Health and Medical Research Council. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Gretchen Myers, MSLP-CCC, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### Pennsylvania, United States

Gretchen Myers is a speech language pathologist with 20+ years experience and private practice owner of Center4Speech in Mars/Cranberry Township, PA area, along with her husband, who is also an SLP. She manages day-to-day operations at Center4Speech, including all matters related to commercial insurance and Medicaid. Gretchen actively volunteers in insurance advocacy efforts with Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association. She completed the Apraxia Kids bootcamp in 2016 and is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech. Gretchen has been a presenter at Apraxia Kids conferences and the PSHA convention. Gretchen specializes in pediatric speech and language disorders and has worked in outpatient settings, schools, and Early Intervention.

*Disclosures: Private Practice owner. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Maelah Nadeau, MS, CCC-SLP

#### 🏠 Illinois, United States

Maelah is an enthusiastic speech-language pathologist with five years of experience within the field. She earned her Master of Science degree in Speech Language Pathology from Nazareth College in Rochester, NY. She has worked across private therapy clinics, school settings, and hospitals, bringing a comprehensive, collaborative, and client-centered approach to care. This diverse background helps her see the full picture when it comes to a child's communication needs. Maelah believes that therapy should be engaging, functional, and customized to each child's unique strengths and needs. She takes pride in building strong rapport with her clients and their families. Her sessions are often filled with creative play, laughter, and the occasional dance party. Maelah has continued her professional growth through trainings in play-based therapy, diagnosis and treatment of CAS using dynamic temporal and tactile cueing (DTTC), feeding in infancy and toddlerhood, AAC, and neurodiversity-affirming practices for autistic students. She's passionate about creating inclusive spaces for all communicators & always seeking new ways to learn & grow. Outside of the therapy room, Maelah spends most of her time with her family and friends. She enjoys traveling, hiking, swimming, skiing, playing tennis, pickleball, and competing in any sort of lawn game activity.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Denise Ng, PhD, MSLP, CPSP

#### 🏠 New South Wales, Australia

Denise is a lecturer from the Speech Pathology discipline at the University of Technology Sydney. She is especially interested in research and clinical practice with multilingual children with Childhood Apraxia of Speech.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Samantha Novick, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

#### 🏠 Florida, United States

Samantha Novick is a speech-language pathologist and owner of Bridge Therapy, a private speech therapy practice with locations in Coral Springs and Jacksonville, Florida. She is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech and has served as the Volunteer Walk Coordinator for the South Florida Walk for Apraxia for the past four years. Additionally, she serves as President of The Friendship Journey, a nonprofit organization that creates authentic connections amongst friends of all abilities through meaningful experiences. Samantha is a LAMP Certified Professional. She is passionate about amplifying the voices of others and cultivating inclusive spaces through her professional and volunteer work. She is a new mom and loves to travel, explore nature and spend time with her husband and son.

*Disclosures: Owner of Bridge Therapy. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Megan Overby, PhD, CCC-SLP

### Pennsylvania, United States

Dr. Megan Overby, currently an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at Curtin University, was previously an Associate Professor at Duquesne University and at The College of Saint Rose. She has been a member of the Professional Advisory Council of Apraxia Kids since 2018 and has been an instructor for the organization's Intensive Training in childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). Megan has over 30 years of experience as a speech-language pathologist in schools, hospitals, agencies, and university clinics in addition to having maintained a private practice early in her career. Her research has explored issues in speech sound disorders and literacy, with a particular focus on CAS. Her research in CAS has considered potential early red flags of the disorder, differences in infancy demonstrated by children later diagnosed with CAS, and parent expectations for long-term outcomes of young children with apraxia. In addition to her research, she presents at conferences and workshops and has authored multiple publications and textbook chapters.

**Disclosures:** *Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. Instructor for Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Ruth Pepper, CEO Speech Apraxia UK, Speech and Language Therapist, Adult with CAS

### Lancashire, United Kingdom

Ruth Pepper is a UK-based Speech and Language Therapist, researcher, and the founder of Speech Apraxia UK, a national organisation providing information, support, and advocacy for individuals and families affected by speech apraxia, as well as a growing professional network for clinicians. She is also a person with Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS), having grown up with the condition herself, which gives her a rare and valuable dual perspective as both clinician and lived-experience expert.

Ruth's personal journey with CAS has directly shaped her professional focus. Having navigated childhood, education, and adult life with a motor speech disorder, she brings an insider understanding of the long-term impact of CAS on communication, identity, confidence, and participation. This lived experience underpins her commitment to improving diagnostic accuracy, evidence-based intervention, and clinician confidence in working with CAS.

She is the founder and CEO of Speech Apraxia UK, which delivers parent support, professional education, CPD events, podcasts, and collaborative work with international researchers, clinicians, and advocacy organisations. Through this work, Ruth has helped build bridges between families, therapists, and researchers, amplifying under-represented voices within the CAS community.

At the Apraxia Kids Conference, Ruth will present findings from her literature review exploring Speech and Language Therapists' perceived knowledge and confidence in the treatment of Childhood Apraxia of Speech. Her work highlights gaps between evidence, training, and clinical confidence, and considers implications for education, supervision, and service delivery. Ruth's research is driven by a clear aim: to improve outcomes for children with CAS by strengthening clinician knowledge, confidence, and access to high-quality, evidence-informed intervention.

**Disclosures:** *Founder and CEO of Speech Apraxia UK which may be referenced in her presentation. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Danielle Plater, MA, CCC-SLP

### Indiana, United States

Danielle Plater is an ASHA-certified pediatric speech-language pathologist at K1ds Count Therapy in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her clinical interests include pediatric motor speech disorders, with a specific focus on childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). Danielle has experience supporting children with suspected and diagnosed CAS across a range of clinical presentations and collaborates with other speech-language pathologists on assessment and treatment planning. She is passionate about helping clinicians build confidence in identifying CAS and implementing evidence-informed assessment and treatment approaches, particularly during the early stages of clinical decision-making. Danielle received her M.A. from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in August 2022 and has since earned two ASHA Awards for Continuing Education (ACE Awards) for her dedication to professional learning, with extensive continuing education focused on CAS.

***Disclosures:** Volunteer Walk Coordinator for Indiana Walk for Apraxia. There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Jonathan Preston, PhD, CCC-SLP

### New York, United States

Dr. Jonathan Preston is a speech-language pathologist and clinical researcher focusing on speech sound disorders. He received his PhD from Syracuse University in 2008 and completed postdoctoral training at Haskins Laboratories, an affiliate of Yale University. He is a Professor in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department at Syracuse University and is a Fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. His research focuses on neurolinguistically-motivated and evidence-based treatments for speech sound disorders. He is currently involved in multiple clinical trials studying motor-based treatments, biofeedback treatments, perceptual treatments, and service delivery models for children with persisting speech sound errors and childhood apraxia of speech. He is also co-founder of SpeechLink, Incorporated, which distributes software for speech sound disorder treatment.

***Disclosures:** Receives salary from Syracuse University. Grant funding received from the National Institutes of Health (NIH 2013-present), Australian National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC, 2019-present), Syracuse University (2021-present). Co-founder of SpeechLink, a company working toward commercialization of Speech Motor Chaining and Artificial Intelligence practice paradigms for speech sound disorders. Dr. Preston developed and continues to research treatments for speech sound disorders, including Speech Motor Chaining and biofeedback. Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Laura Reeger, MA, CCC-SLP

### Ohio, United States

Traveling around the country as an Air Force spouse, Laura worked in a variety of settings specializing in augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and children and adults with motor speech disorders and comorbidities. She completed extensive training in a variety of augmentative communication programs for children and adults with complex communication needs as well as intensive courses in the principles of sensory integration. In 2022, she became a PROMPT Instructor and travels the United States teaching.

*Disclosures: PROMPT Instructor, receive compensation for teaching courses. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Amanda Rhode, Parent of Apraxia Star, Board Vice President for Kids Together Playground

#### North Carolina, United States

Amanda Rhode is the parent of a delightful six-year-old with CAS.

For years, Amanda witnessed the toll of words trapped behind her daughter's curious eyes and felt the weight of others' confusion and impatient glances.

Watching her daughter become increasingly defeated as she tried to express herself, Amanda realized the situation was more complex than "she'll grow out of it."

Teaming up with an SLP who embraced an individualized and collaborative approach, Amanda observed how his use of play, empathy, and patience built a connection that created a door to communication.

Rewired by this intentional, connection-first pathway to communication, Amanda is pivoting her career from consumer tech experience design to speech and language assistive technology.

She currently serves as Board Vice President of Kids Together Inc. — an NC nonprofit supporting a nationally recognized inclusive playground — where she leads the development of a context-specific communication system designed to invite connection for people of all communication abilities.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Jennifer Sakowicz, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

#### Connecticut, United States

Jennifer Sakowicz, MS, CCC-SLP is a pediatric speech-language pathologist who owns her own practice in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. She received her Master's Degree in Communication Disorders from Southern Connecticut State University in 2009. She specializes in the treatment of speech sound disorders, including childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) as well as language-based literacy disorders. Jennifer is pleased to be Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech. She is also proud to be recognized as a Certified DTTC Research Clinician with the PRACTICE Child Apraxia Treatment Research Team. To date, she has received five awards for continuing education (ACE) from the American-Speech-Language-Hearing-Association and has been a five-time presenter at the Apraxia Kids National Conferences. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and dog, reading books, riding her Peloton, and watching UCONN basketball.

*Disclosures: Private Practice owner. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Amy Salera, Parent of an Apraxia Star, Community Engagement Manager for Apraxia Kids

#### Pennsylvania, United States

Amy Salera is the Community Engagement Manager at Apraxia Kids and a parent of a child with apraxia of speech. As a staff member, she focuses on outreach and engagement, awareness, and fundraising efforts. She values connecting with the apraxia community, educating others, and sustaining the mission of Apraxia Kids. Amy has also utilized many of the resources offered by

Apraxia Kids when supporting and advocating for her own child, and uses her experience as a parent to assist those who are on the same journey. She is passionate about apraxia of speech becoming recognized and accepted so that others understand the common complications of this disorder and is always willing to answer questions, share ideas, and tell her story in order to motivate a positive change for future generations.

**Disclosures:** Full time salaried employee for Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Maggie San Pedro, MS, CCC-SLP

#### Florida, United States

Maggie San Pedro is a speech-language pathologist and clinical manager at Bridge Therapy, a private speech therapy practice serving South Florida and Jacksonville, FL. She attended the 2025 Apraxia Kids Boot Camp and has volunteered with the South Florida Walk for Apraxia since 2022 and the Jacksonville Walk for Apraxia since 2024. Maggie is a LAMP Certified Professional who values collaborative, family-centered, and evidence-based care, particularly when supporting children with childhood apraxia of speech and complex communication needs.

**Disclosures:** Salaried employee at Bridge Therapy. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Abigail Schlesinger, MD

#### Pennsylvania, United States

Dr. Abigail Schlesinger is a child and adolescent psychiatrist with an interest in increasing access to quality behavioral health and developmental services for children and families. She was instrumental in the development of Children's Community Pediatrics Behavioral Health (CCPBH), a service that embeds therapists and psychiatrists in pediatric primary care. CCPBHS has won local, state, and national awards for efficiently improving access to care.

Dr. Schlesinger is the Chief of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry and Integrated Care UPMC Western Psychiatric Hospital and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, and the Medical Director of Children's TiPS. Dr. Schlesinger is also an Associate Professor of Psychiatry & Pediatric University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

**Disclosures:** Employed by UPMC hospital system. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

### Laurie Sherman, MA, CCC-SLP

#### Pennsylvania, United States

Laurie Sherman Prusko earned a B.A. in Communicative Disorders from West Chester University and an M.A. in Speech Language Pathology from Temple University. Laurie has over a decade of experience in the diagnosis and treatment of motor speech disorders, with expertise in supporting the motor speech development of autistic toddlers and children. Laurie has worked extensively in direct treatment and in supervisory roles in clinical practice, in private practice, and with Birth to Three Early Intervention.

**Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.

## Jami Slotnick, Parent of a Child with Apraxia

### 🏠 Pennsylvania, United States

Jami Slotnick hails from Philadelphia, PA where she is a mom of 14-year-old Brody Slotnick who was diagnosed at age 3. This is her third conference. Jami is a full-time marketing professional for Di Bruno Bros, an Italian Specialty food store and restaurant with 7 locations. Jami is very active in Brody's life, an ever-present guiding light in helping her son with academics and helping him meet goals in extracurricular activities such as karate and coding. For the last Philadelphia Walk, Brody, Jami and Michael along with additional friends and family raised enough money to be named Top Fundraising Team. Jami feels passionately about educating teachers and therapists about CAS. She is constantly reminding those who support Brody that "Just because he doesn't say it, doesn't mean he doesn't know it." Jami has been a fierce advocate for her son in many areas: insurance, FAPE, and other social realms. When the family isn't working on homework together, you'll find them watching Formula One racing on TV and also cheering on their favorite Philly Sports Teams, The Eagles, The Phillies, The Flyers and The 76ers. During the summer months, Brody and family enjoy hanging out in Ventnor, NJ with Brody's mom-mom & pop-pop on the beach & in the pool.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Leah Solomon, MS CCC-SLP

### 🏠 Illinois, United States

Leah Solomon, MS, CCC-SLP is an Illinois state licensed and nationally certified speech language pathologist. Leah received an undergraduate degree in Communicative Disorders from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a graduate degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Teacher's College-Columbia University. Leah has experience working with a wide population of children both in the school setting and in her private practice. Through this she has gained experience evaluating and treating clients with speech, language, and learning needs. Leah specializes in treating articulation and phonological disorders, childhood apraxia of speech, late-talking, language disorders, as well as complex intellectual and physical disabilities. Leah understands that each child and family is different and therefore therapy must be tailored to address each individual. Leah also believes communication between therapists, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders is an essential part of your child's speech therapy program. Leah currently resides in Illinois with her husband and two children. In her free time, Leah enjoys playing pickleball, baking, and going for bike rides with her family.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Shelby Stewart, Lived Experience

### 🏠 Ohio, United States

Shelby is a 14 year old student. Shelby is an athlete, leader, and a great friend. As a toddler she was diagnosed with CAS, and she began stuttering at age 5. Shelby's goals are to educate others about what it is like to grow up with a speech disorder, and to inspire fellow children who have apraxia of speech to use their voices.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Kelly Sullivan, MA, CCC-SLP

### New York, United States

Kelly Sullivan is a project manager for the Case Speech Production Lab and the treating clinician for the Caregiver Training Study. She received her M.A. in Speech-Language Pathology from Hofstra University in Spring 2022. Kelly is an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist with a special interest in speech sound disorders in children.

***Disclosures:** Treating Clinician and Project Manager for the Caregiver Training Study funded by the Once Upon a Time Foundation. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Melissa Taberski, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech

### New York, United States

Melissa Taberski, MS, CCC-SLP, is a Speech-Language Pathologist and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Specialist with over 20 years of experience supporting children and adolescents with complex communication needs. She is Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Clinical Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS). Melissa's clinical work spans ages 4-21 and includes comprehensive speech-language and AAC evaluations, Independent Educational Evaluations (IEEs), literacy assessment and intervention, and school-based consultation. Her work emphasizes the intersection of speech, language, literacy, assistive technology, and access to instruction. In addition to her professional role, Melissa brings a deeply personal perspective as the parent of a child with CAS and dysgraphia. This dual lens informs her advocacy, teaching, and presentations, which focus on supporting students with CAS beyond the early years, particularly as academic, social, and emotional demands increase. Melissa presents nationally to families, clinicians, and school teams, translating research into practical, school-based strategies and empowering stakeholders to better support students with CAS across settings and developmental stages.

***Disclosures:** Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

## Chitra Thadathil, Master in Speech & Hearing; Post Graduate Certificate in Sensory Integration

### Bangalore, India

Chitra Thadathil is the Founding Director and Clinical Head of Dimensions Centre for Child Development, with branches in Bangalore and Coimbatore, and the Founder & CEO of Autism Synergies. With over two decades of experience (22+ Years) as a Speech-Language Pathologist, Chitra has trained and led multidisciplinary teams of therapists, developed evidence-based intervention programs, and mentored professionals and parents across India and abroad.

She designed and directed several flagship training programs - including Comprehensive Sensory Motor Intervention (COSMI) for pediatric feeding and swallowing, Applied Sensory Integration for Speech Language Pathologists (ASI-SLP), Autism Deep Dive for Parents, and the Fellowship in Pediatric Feeding Disorders, all of which impacted thousands of clinicians and families globally.

Chitra holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Sensory Integration from Sheffield Hallam University, UK, and Master's in Speech and Hearing from Bangalore University. She has also received advanced certification in PROMPT, SOS Approach to Feeding, DIR Floortime, DTTC for CAS, OPT, and Beckman Oral Motor Therapy from leading international institutions.

She has presented her research internationally, including at Feeding Matters USA, and authored three manuals and workbooks, such as the Comprehensive Sensory Motor Intervention Guide for Pediatric Feeding and Swallowing. A recipient of multiple awards - including the Speech-Language Pathologist of the Year (2023) and Digital Women Award for Social Impact (2022) - Chitra is also the President-Elect of the Indian Speech and Hearing Association, Bengaluru Chapter (ISHA-BC). Her vision is to ensure that every child receives therapy rooted in research, compassion, & neuro-affirming principles, while empowering future professionals to bridge science with practice.

***Disclosures:** Founding Director and Clinical Head of Dimensions Centre for Child Development. Founder & CEO of Autism Synergies. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Donna Thomas, PhD

#### New South Wales, Australia

Dr. Donna Thomas is a Certified Practicing Speech Pathologist and Member of Speech Pathology Australia. She works as a clinical educator, lecturer, and researcher at The University of Sydney. Her research focusses on two main areas (1) treatment for children with motor speech disorders, particularly childhood apraxia of speech (CAS), (2) clinical education. She recently completed work on two large Randomised Control Studies of Dynamic Temporal and Tactile Cueing (DTTC) with international colleagues. Donna deeply committed to enhancing the uptake of evidence-based practice in everyday clinical settings. Her research employs qualitative methodologies to explore the perspectives of caregivers and clinicians, shedding light on their experiences with speech-language pathology services. Through this work, she aims to bridge the gap between research and practice, ensuring that interventions are both effective and responsive to the needs of families and practitioners.

***Disclosures:** Paid employee at The University of Sydney. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Juliane Tosin Fernandes, Co-Founder, Board Member, and Vice President for Abrapraxia

#### Brazil

Juliane Tosin is a mechanical engineer. She is one of the founders and the Vice President of the Brazilian Association of Childhood Apraxia of Speech (Abrapraxia). She is Giovana's mother, a lovely girl with CAS.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Mirjam van Tellingen, MA

#### Friesland, Netherlands

Mirjam van Tellingen is PhD student, clinical linguist and speech and language pathologist with over 15 years of experience in childhood rehabilitation care. She has provided care for many children with CAS, with and without additional diagnoses. In her PhD project she focusses on treatment for children with CAS, evaluating the efficacy of Speech-Music Therapy in the treatment of CAS.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

**Amber Vecchio, Parent of a Child with Apraxia, Project Management Professional (PMP), Foundation Certification with the Association for Proposal Management Professionals**

**🏠 Pennsylvania, United States**

Amber Vecchio is a parent of a child with CAS and 20 year project management and proposal development professional in the federal, state, and local government space. Throughout her career she has worked with stakeholders at all levels of government and wanted to use that experience and skills to spread awareness about CAS and support legislative change. Over the past two (2) years she has worked tirelessly to reach out to local legislators and educate them on challenges our families face. Through her work, she has helped introduce House Bill 949 in Pennsylvania which would amend existing legislation around insurance coverage for stuttering to include insurance coverage for CAS. Her goal is to educate other families about their role in their communities and how to engage their local legislators to follow the examples set in Pennsylvania. Amber is a former board member for Apraxia Kids, on the Parent Advisory Committee for the Pennsylvania Speech Language and Hearing Association, a member of the South Fayette Fire Advisory Services Committee, and recently completed the Pennsylvania Education & Advocacy Leadership Center (PEAL) Fall 2025 Family Leadership Institute Training.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

**Shelley Velleman, PhD, CCC-SLP, ASHA Fellow, FNAP**

**🏠 Maryland, United States**

Shelley L. Velleman, an Apraxia Kids Professional Advisory Council member, is Professor Emerita of Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Vermont. Her work focuses on speech development in children with pediatric motor speech disorders, especially childhood apraxia of speech. She specializes in neurodevelopmental syndromes including 7q11.23 duplication syndrome, Williams syndrome, autism spectrum disorder, and Down syndrome. She also has researched prelinguistic vocalizations, early words, and the early speech development of children learning a variety of languages and dialects. Dr. Velleman's education includes a linguistics doctorate with a specialization in child phonology and a master's degree in speech-language pathology. She taught Communication Sciences and Disorders at the undergraduate and graduate level from 1984 - 2023. She also held full-time clinical positions in pediatric speech-language pathology for six years. She presents at scientific conferences and workshops around the U.S. and the world and has published many articles and three books. She is co-author of the Language Neutral Assessment of Motor Speech (LAMS) and a Fellow of ASHA and the National Academies of Practice.

***Disclosures:** Member of Professional Advisory Council for Apraxia Kids. Co-author, Language-neutral Assessment of Motor Speech (in press). Professor emerita, University of Vermont. Duplication Cares Medical Advisory Board member. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

**Breanna Waldrup, MS, CCC-SLP, Recognized by Apraxia Kids for Advanced Training and Expertise in Childhood Apraxia of Speech**

**🏠 Texas, United States**

Breanna Waldrup, MS, CCC-SLP is a speech-language pathologist with over 17 years of experience, 14 of which have been focused on the diagnosis and treatment of motor speech disorders, particularly childhood apraxia of speech (CAS). During this time, she has evaluated and

treated hundreds of children with motor speech disorders utilizing a variety of evidence-based motor treatment methodologies. Breanna is passionate about individualizing therapy to the child's current needs, so she has not only undergone extensive training in motor treatment methodologies, but also methods for facilitating emotional and sensory regulation as well as supporting language development. She has also addressed literacy challenges for many of the children she treats. Breanna continues to maintain a small caseload of children with motor speech challenges and is continually learning how to best support all children, including children who are neurodiverse and from diverse backgrounds. For the past 10 years, Breanna has shared her wealth of clinical experience through presentations on CAS and literacy, as well as providing consultations to families and professionals and conducting expert-level speech evaluations and therapy intensives. A self-professed speech nerd, she has a passion for staying up-to-date on the latest research evidence and translating the information into clinical practice. Breanna is the Director of Educational Programming for Bjorem & Bolles Childhood Apraxia Education Initiative.

***Disclosures:** Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. Graduate of Apraxia Kids Boot Camp. Paid position at Bjorem & Bolles Childhood Apraxia Education Initiative. Receives royalties from webinars on Knowledge is Now. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Alba Walter, Lived Experience

🏠 Fife, United Kingdom

Alba Walter is a student at the University of St Andrews in Scotland, where she is majoring in Neuroscience with a special interest in motor development.

Alba has been part of the Apraxia Junior Board since March 2025, and attended her first Apraxia Kids conference in 2024 invited by her speech therapist. This opportunity has been very impactful as it has not only led Alba to deepen her understanding of CAS but has also introduced her to a supportive community which has helped grow her confidence with speaking!

***Disclosures:** Member of Apraxia Kids Junior Board. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Emily Wang, PhD, CCC-SLP

🏠 Wisconsin, United States

Emily W. Wang, PhD, CCC-SLP, is a postdoctoral researcher and T32 trainee at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Department of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery under the advisement of Dr. Katherine Hustad. She is a practicing speech language pathologist and recently received her doctoral degree from New York University. Emily's primary research interests include speech intelligibility and prosodic impairment in children with pediatric motor based impairments, particularly childhood apraxia of speech and dysarthria in children with cerebral palsy.

***Disclosures:** There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Elizabeth White, LMSW

🏠 Texas, United States

Elizabeth White grew up with Childhood Apraxia of Speech, but has never allowed it to become an identifier of who she is or what she can do. She is a school social worker who assists and supports her students and uses her experiences with apraxia to connect with students. She hopes that she

can empower students and their families to realize that their challenges are just obstacles that can be overcome. Currently, Elizabeth is finishing up her clinical hours to become a fully licensed clinical social worker. When not at work or studying for the clinical exam, Elizabeth can be found curled up on her sofa with a good book and her calico cat Penelope.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Eddy Wong, SLP, PhD

🏠 Pokfulam, Hong Kong

Eddy Wong is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Hong Kong. He has practiced as a speech-language pathologist in Hong Kong for over 18 years, specializing in working with Cantonese-speaking and bilingual children with speech and language disorders. His research focuses on childhood apraxia of speech (CAS) in monolingual and bilingual speakers of Cantonese and other non-English languages. He has published extensively in this area and has presented his work at conferences, workshops, and seminars.

*Disclosures: Presentation includes findings from various research projects, including the project supported by the Doctoral Student Clinical Research Grants from Apraxia Kids. There are no other relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

### Jenna Wu, BA

🏠 New South Wales, Australia

Jenna Wu is a Master of Speech-Language Pathology student at the University of Sydney. Her interests include speech sound disorders in multilingual children. She is especially interested in assessment and intervention for multilingual children with childhood apraxia of speech.

*Disclosures: There are no relevant financial or non-financial relationships to disclose.*

**Please refer to the Session Guide  
to see the full schedule and session details.**