Happy new year to our BCS-S affiliates as we enter 2021. Each one of us is reflecting on last year as we consider the vast information and changes we navigated in our mission to serve patients and their families through the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our resilience in learning about coronavirus and adapting practices to promote the safety of our patients and staff across the spectrum of dysphagia care will make us stronger as a specialty united in advocating for the highest quality dysphagia services.

In 2020, the ABSSD accomplished a number of goals despite the challenges presented by COVID-19:

- Our applications committee compiled a profile of a successful BCS-S candidate for driving improved resources for our future affiliates in determining their own eligibility.

- Our continuing education committee planned, recorded and published two new programs to our website on development of the respiratory and gastro-intestinal systems now available to students and faculty in meeting ASHA’s updated educational guidelines. This industrious committee also directed submission of a consensus paper on clinical practice guidelines for administration of FEES.

- Our public relations committee hosted two Facebook Live Events on telehealth dysphagia services and caregiver burden relating to
The communications committee coordinated a set of website goals for updating the ABSSD website for affiliates and consumers in 2021.

And 2020 only served to enrich our partnerships with SIG 13, Dysphagia Research Society, and Bracco Diagnostics as we worked together to bring forth two meetings-- the DRS virtual meeting and the Meet the Masters "COVID 19-It’s Hard to Swallow: Managing Patients with Dysphagia During a Pandemic".

As we enter this new year, the ABSSD carries the torch forward following a very productive 2020. We will continue to work toward publication of both adult and pediatric FEES clinical practice guidelines to promote clinical excellence in endoscopic evaluation. We will compose resources for potential affiliates in guiding a career pathway that meets the criteria for successful BCS-S application. We will nurture our special interest and corporate partnerships, and our continuing education committee will continue to develop advanced level professional education. And finally, our 2021 goals include a website rebuild to make resources more readily accessible to our consumers, affiliates and specialty candidates.

The ABSSD looks forward to a creative and productive year. Wishing all of our consumers, affiliates and partners the best in 2021!

Molly A. Knigge, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S
AB-SSD Chairperson

Congratulations and welcome to the newest BCS-S Affiliates!

Kathleen Cazzato, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S
University of Arizona
Mentor: Nancy Swigert

Maria Flores, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S
Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula

2021 ABSSD Board of Directors

A warm welcome to the ABSSD Board of Directors. Through their dedication to advancing the field of swallowing and swallowing disorders, the ABSSD Board of Directors strives to support the endeavors of the ABSSD and support its BCS-S affiliates in continued clinical and professional excellence.

Molly Knigge, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S
Chairperson
Kendrea Garand, PhD, CScD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Vice Chairperson*

Yvette McCoy, MS-CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Secretary*

Mario Landera, SLPD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Treasurer*

Karen Ball, MPA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Application Committee Chair*

Donna Scarborough, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*CE Committee Co-Chair*

Heather Starmer, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*CE Committee Co-Chair*

Lisa Evangelista, CScD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Public Relations and Communications Committee Co-Chair*

Joan Arsenault, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Maria Centeno, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Marta Kazandjian, MA, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Gina Palma, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

Joe Murray, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S  
*Historian*

Phillip Hartzer, BSIM, MSM  
*Consumer Board Member*

We would also like to recognize co-chair of the PRCC, Karen Sheffler, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, and members of the Applications, Examinations, Public Relations and Communications, and Continuing Education committees for their contributions to ABSSD.

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**2020 Achievements of the Continuing Education Committee**

Congratulations to the Continuing Education Committee on their achievements in providing high quality and contemporary continuing education events.

In 2020, the ABSSD CE committee completed continuing education courses in development of the GI system and the pulmonary system. These lectures are free for graduate students and are meant to support new ASHA guidelines for graduate student training. Certified clinicians can view these lectures for a charge and earn CEUs.

The ABSSD CE committee partnered with Bracco Diagnostics Inc. to develop the 2020 Virtual Meet the Masters Symposium. This event featured 8.5 hours of continuing education on the topic of managing dysphagia in the era of COVID-19. Participants who registered before January 1, 2021 enjoyed the bargain price of $19 and were entered in a drawing to win either a DRS virtual convention registration waiver or a SIG-13 membership for 2021. Proceeds of registrations received by the end of 2020 were shared with partner organizations DRS and NFOSD to support their endeavors in dysphagia research and services.
The Diana Bracco Outstanding Applicant of the year award winner was Jenny Reynolds, MS CCC-SLP, CLC, CNT, BCS-S. Congratulations again Jenny and thank you for all your excellent work to support patients with dysphagia.

Applications Committee’s Response to 2020 ABSSD Survey

In 2020, our affiliates provided feedback on the BCS-S application process. In reviewing your comments, the Applications Committee has approved changes to CEU documentation for new applicants and renewals.

We have developed a log sheet with examples of how to correctly record CEU’s. This is now available on the ABSSD Website. Interested applicants can download this form together with Appendix A (examples). It is very important to complete this after every CEU event attended and attach required supporting information if appropriate.

The Applications Committee has also eliminated the requirement to categorize the CEU’s obtained into those pertaining to Anatomy and Physiology, Evaluation and Treatment.

These changes have been made to the on-line application and this requirement will no longer be needed.

ABSSD is on Instagram

The ABSSD has expanded its social media presence and is now on Instagram. Check out @bcsswallowing for updates and BCS-S affiliate news from the ABSSD. In addition, we can be found on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook at ‘bcsswallowing’

PRCC is Seeking Affiliate Member Stories

In an ongoing effort to promote specialty certification, the Public Relations and Communications Committee (PRCC) of the ABSSD is seeking stories from affiliate members. We are proud of the professional accomplishments and successes our affiliate members have achieved. PRCC is interested in sharing your stories about why you chose to pursue the BCS and how the designation contributed to advancement in your career and to the field of speech pathology and dysphagia. If you would like to contribute, contact Karen@badgerbay.co and someone from the PRCC will contact you.