



2013 Board Members

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MA, CCC-SLP, BRS-S

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MS, CCC-SLP, BRS-S

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MA, CCC-SLP, BRS-S

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## Easy to Digest

August 2013

### NEW BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED

Congratulations to our newly elected Board members, who will serve from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2016. Joanne Petro will be the consumer representative to the board. The board-recognized specialists elected are: Debra Suiter, Cesar Ruiz and Kate Hutcheson. To read more about them, visit the BRSS website ([www.swallowingdisorders.org](http://www.swallowingdisorders.org)) and click on the Affiliates tab.

### WELCOME NEW AFFILIATES!

The Board is happy to announce the latest colleagues to join the ranks of the Specialty Board on Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders:

#### **Susan McCormack**

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

#### **Gina Wiley**

Iowa City VA Health Care System

#### **Leslie McKee**

Ohio Health/Riverside Methodist Hospital

Mentor: Donna Edwards

#### **Tammy Wigginton**

University of Kentucky Voice and Swallowing Clinic

Mentor: Mary Brawley

#### **Heather Myers**

The Medical Center of Aurora

Mentor: Sarah Glenn

#### **Melissa Redfearn**

Sheltering Arms

Mentor: Fae Boczko

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BRS-S Websites:  
[www.swallowingdisorders.org](http://www.swallowingdisorders.org)  
[www.swallowingdisordersceu.org](http://www.swallowingdisordersceu.org)

Congratulations to each new Affiliate, and many thanks to each Mentor!

### **SUMMARY OF RESULTS FROM 2013 AFFILIATES SURVEY: HERE'S WHAT YOU SAID...**

In February the Board sent an affiliate satisfaction survey to 202 affiliates. We received 63 responses for a 31% return rate. We wanted to share with you some of the highlights of that feedback. The Board will use this information to guide activities over the next year.

#### Who replied

Most respondents have practice greater than 20 years (4.26%) and the overwhelming majority worked in hospitals (64.5%) and with adults (66.1%). We heard from more recent affiliates (e.g. 38.3% obtained their BRS-S in 2012), but had responses from affiliates in most years since 2003. The overwhelming benefit to holding the designator was personal fulfillment (96.6%), followed by increased opportunity for personal and professional growth and advancement (53.4%). Most organizations (67%) do not recognize and reward SLPs who hold the BRS-S. Those that do typically do so through clinical ladder advancement (50.0%) or reimbursement for costs of applying (40.9%).

#### Mentor program

Most of the respondents (87.0%) had used a mentor during the application process, and most (80.3%) found the mentor to be very helpful. The mentor committee is using the specific feedback to enhance the program. They are developing an electronic newsletter specifically for mentees (the mentors will be copied on this).

#### CE Program

About 79% of respondents go to the web site to learn about our CE programs and opportunities and about half (53%) have taken our courses. 70% think we have good mix of courses and topics at the CE site and 90% find the purchase process easy or extremely easy. Almost half of respondents have taken our CE courses.

#### Application Process

On one thing everyone agreed, and that is the filling out the application form was challenging. Some thought there should be more examples. The Applications Committee is considering the specific suggestions made.

#### Exam Process

Feedback provided about the exam is currently being discussed by the Exam Committee.

### **MENTORSHIP COMMITTEE: NOTE TO MENTORS...**

Our recent BRS Survey reflects the appreciation of those supported by mentors throughout the process from tentative initiation to successful application submission. As a Committee, we appreciate all you do to help our mentees and applicants while promoting the high standards of BRS-S.

We wish to share our appreciation of your volunteer spirit and willingness to support new mentees who have:

- I earned excellence from colleagues specializing in dysphagia

- Looked up to their professors and fellow clinicians
- Now chosen to enrich the care they provide to patients and families

It is our pleasure to share that we currently have over 300 mentees striving to meet the demands of the rigorous application process. As new BRS-S affiliates emerge, they have been quite excited to serve as mentors to others. They voice their delight in being offered the opportunity to support the goals of BRS to best help patients and families. Our number of mentors is gradually increasing and this helps to solidify the support system for mentees. Thank you again to the mentors for all you do in sharing your free time, your work ethic, your encouragement and your standards.

Special thanks to Jo Puntill for mentoring one of our newest BRS-S affiliates, Angela McKinney. Thank you for the update Jo! Prior listing of the mentor was in error.

Donna Edwards - Emily Mayfield - Cheryl Anselmo  
BRS-S Mentorship Steering Committee

### **BRS-S presence at the Dysphagia Research Society (DRS) Meeting**

In our last issue, we listed the names of colleagues who presented or moderated sessions, papers or posters. We omitted our Affiliate Penny Gumbel.

### **TRANSITION FROM Board Recognized TO Board Certified**

In 2012, the ASHA Board of Directors approved a resolution to change the specialty program from a "recognition" program to a "certification" program. ASHA set minimum standards, and each Board still has a great deal of independence. As long as the minimum standards are met, boards can require higher standards. The minimum standards outlined by ASHA's BOD are included on the attached document. [Click here for a copy.](#)

As you can see, the requirements for obtaining BRS-S are more stringent than the minimum requirements, and the board has no intention of changing our standards. We are currently discussing how the change in minimum standards would affect our Academic/Administrative Track.

What does this mean for you? As an already-recognized specialist, your title will change from Board Recognized Specialist in Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders to Board Certified Specialist. We do not know yet exactly how the initials you use (e.g. currently BRS-S) will change, but will let you know as soon as approval is received from ASHA's Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC). The CFCC will be the oversight body for all of the specialty boards. The Council for Clinical Specialty Recognition (CCSR) which previously oversaw the specialty recognition program will be sunset.

We are pleased to announce that Linda Mackay, who chaired our specialty board from 2009-2011 and currently serves as our historian, has been appointed to the CFCC. Linda and Lynn Flahive, who finishes her term as chair of the Child Language Specialty Board this year, will assure the interests of the boards and recognized (soon to be certified) specialists are represented.

The chairs of the three current specialty boards (swallowing, fluency and child language) have participated in conference calls with the CFCC to provide input on the transition plan from recognition to specialty. The boards can also select a new name if they desire. Although not required by ASHA, the three boards are in agreement that the names of each board should be parallel in structure. We'll keep you in the loop regarding changes to the name of our board.

### **ACTIVITIES AT CONVENTION 2013**

The annual ASHA Convention is fast approaching. We'll be joining many of our colleagues in the windy city of Chicago in November. The Executive Board for the Specialty Board on Swallowing & Swallowing Disorders will be meeting all day Wednesday, November 13 (room TBD). Affiliates are welcome to attend and observe.

All Affiliates Meeting: this year's meeting will not include breakfast, but will be packed with information on the many activities that have taken place this year and will help us ride into 2014. So BYOB (Bring Your Own Breakfast) and join us and meet other Affiliates on **November 14 at 7:00am (room TBD)**.

### **NEW WEBSITE IN DEVELOPMENT**

The Executive Board recently collaborated with our management firm, Badgerbay, to select a new web provider, YourMembership.org. The new site will not only be easier to navigate, it will be more colorful, include more pictures and graphics and provide more helpful information to consumers and to those interested in applying. And, of course, to help our affiliates in many ways: ease of updating professional profiles (so consumers can find you); updated Speaker's Bureau; improved "Find a Specialist" function (so consumers can find you - which is, of course, one of the main reasons our board exists: to guide consumers to the specialist who can help them).

### **PASSAGES**

Our colleague and friend, Diane Wheeler died on June 16, 2013. She was a charter member of the Specialty Board on Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders (BRS-S). Diane served her state association, NYSSLHA, in many capacities including serving as co-chairperson for the committee that worked on including "swallowing" within the scope of practice for speech-language pathologists in New York State. Diane received the Distinguished Service Award from the NYSSLHA and the Special Citation for Service.

She worked at the Burke Rehabilitation Center. She was the coordinator of the Dysphagia Program and Assistant Director at New York University Medical Center, Goldwater Hospital. She was a consultant to the Hyman-Newman Institute for Neurology and Neurosurgery. She was also a consultant at New York Hospital, Queens Division and Cabrini of Westchester-Saint Cabrini Nursing Home. She was on the faculty of Hunter College, City University of New York and a guest lecturer at Mercy College.

[Forward email](#)



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