Welcome to our newest BCS-S Affiliates

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In Memoriam:  Dr. Justine Joan Sheppard

Dr. Justine Joan Sheppard, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-S, ASHA-Fellow, passed away on the morning of March 31st, 2018 in her home after a 3-year battle with breast cancer. She was surrounded by family and loved ones in her final days.

If you did not have the honor to know Joan professionally, she is one of the very few in our field who devoted her life to working with and for individuals with intellectual and developmental disability and cerebral palsy. Her contributions and her tireless work, up until the very end, to
advance the care and management of individuals with disability are unmatched.

Joan spent decades serving and conducting clinical research on this significantly underserved population, and developed several tools to help in the early diagnosis and management of dysphagia in these patients. The Dysphagia Disorder Survey (DDS) (Sheppard et al. 2014) has been repeatedly cited as having the best psychometric properties and highest clinical utility among a number of clinical assessment tools for pediatric dysphagia and is used internationally by hundreds of dysphagia specialists.

Joan was extremely well known and respected internationally for her work. She traveled yearly to Australia and Europe and had been invited to talk in the Middle East, China, and other parts of the world several times. Her work has influenced thousands of clinicians and patients across the globe. Joan was also a pioneer in the area of forensic speech language pathology and one of the first pediatric dysphagia experts to advocate for patients in the legal domain. In addition, Joan's passion for teaching and her tremendous love for her students were inspirational. At Teachers College Columbia University, Joan prepared two generations of students for careers as teachers and clinicians.

For those who knew her best, it is her unfailing kindness, enthusiasm for life, and true humility for which she will be remembered most. As our colleague Jim Coyle said: "let's keep carrying Joan's torch of excellence, collaboration, and lifelong learning." Joan was an avid supporter of lifelong learning and research. Despite her illness she only missed two DRS meetings over the years and she attended both ASHA and DRS in 2017, where she won one of the DRS Best Poster awards.

Joan was a valued member of the ABSSD applications committee for over 8 years. She was a valued member of the committee, volunteering to assist in any way she could. She cheerily took on applications and was integral in discussions when the decisions were not unanimous. She generously took on editorial duties when we recently revised our Related Professional Activities rubric. Her expertise, knowledge, dedication, and attention to details were very much appreciated. Her contributions will be missed.

Donations in her name may be made to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center or the Anne Moore Breast Cancer Research Fund. A donation fund for a student award or scholarship in Joan's honor are being planned and should be announced in the coming months.

Her obituary can be found here.

June is National Dysphagia Awareness Month

In 2008, Congress passed a statute declaring June as National Dysphagia Awareness Month. Since then, the NFOSD has hosted awareness campaigns during the month of June. This year, the NFOSD is hosting two initiatives and provided the following information for ABSSD members:
"Faces of Dysphagia" awareness campaign: We are recruiting 30 volunteers impacted by dysphagia to share a photo, brief story, and inspiration quote to show that dysphagia doesn't have to dictate one's quality of life. Attached is an example. We will share these photos on our social media (Facebook and Twitter) platforms. Each photo will have a sponsor who has pledged a certain dollar amount for each time a photo is shared. Last year, we reached 750 thousand people and raised over $10K for dysphagia education, research, and advocacy with a "photo fact of the day." There were several BCS-S clinicians sponsors (Nancy Swigert, Liza Blumenfeld, Theresa Richards, Tiffany Turner, Jan Pryor). We're still looking for sponsors if anyone is interested. If you could encourage BCS-S clinicians to share these photos during June, that would be fantastic!

"IDDSI Recipe Challenge" contest: The NFOSD is teaming up with IDDSI for a recipe contest. Participants can share a 1-minute video of their food/beverage creation, demonstrating which IDDSI category it fits into. Winners will receive $100. Anyone is welcome to participate - individuals, healthcare organizations, corporations, families, etc. Website for more info: http://swallowingdisorderfoundation.com/iddsi-2018-contest/