



AUSTIN SPEECH LABS

stroke recovery one word at a time

What is Your Voice Worth?

As 2017 comes to a close, we like to take the time to reflect upon all that we have accomplished this past year. We are excited for the continued growth and development of this organization, from the expansion of our board to the increased collaboration with Dell Medical School, St. David's Medical Center



and several student organizations at The University of Texas. We treated over 432 clients this year, many having relocated to Austin in order to get the intense therapy they need at affordable rates. This year we spread awareness of the impacts of stroke by starting the #silencechallenge and cohosting our first annual World Stroke Day health fair. We are unbelievably appreciative to all those who donate and share their continuous support for Austin Speech Labs. This year has been one of deep reflection and striving to constantly improve our efforts. It has reinforced that alone our voices are powerful, but together they are unstoppable.

2018 Boot Camp Dates

January 16th - March 9th

March 26th - May 18th

June 4th - August 3rd

September 4th - October 26th

October 28th - December 21st



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Austin Speech Labs: 10 Years and Beyond



10 years! It's hard to believe it's been that long, but on May 3, 2018 we will be celebrating this milestone at our One Word At A Time Event! The organization that we thought would be a place for people to receive speech therapy, at a moderate cost, after they left the rehab hospital, became much more than just a speech therapy center. It became a place for stroke survivors and their caregivers to socialize and share their problems, a research center, a training center for students and interns, and most importantly, a place that provides an opportunity for a stroke survivor to receive therapy for as long as they need it to regain their basic human need - Communication!

As we approach our 10th anniversary, we want to reflect on the differences your support has made. Because of you, Austin Speech Labs has:

- provided over 100,000 hours of therapy
- educated our community about strokes and stroke prevention as 80% are preventable
- returned 45% of eligible young adults back to the workforce
- conducted pilot studies to better understand language recovery

The accomplishments of our clients is inspiring, to list a few....a twenty-one year old went back to finish her undergrad degree, a forty-five year old went back to work part time, a fifty-three year old went to work at his previous company and an eighty year old is enjoying his child and grandkids as he can now recall and say their names.

We could not have done this by ourselves and we hope we can count on you for your continued support. With the advancement in technology and medicine, and with collaborations with The University of Texas and hospitals in Austin, over the next 10 years, Austin Speech Labs will aim to:

- design and develop innovative treatments to reduce the length of recovery time
- use technology to reach stroke survivors beyond Central Texas and educate the community to prevent strokes
- a haven for stroke survivors across diverse groups to be able to receive therapy regardless of their financial status and worry of the cost of services

I wish I had the words to express how thankful I am for the difference you have made through your donations, advocacy and volunteering.

To each one of you, on behalf of the Austin Speech Labs' team, board members and clients, **thank you for providing a unique place for stroke survivors and their families.**

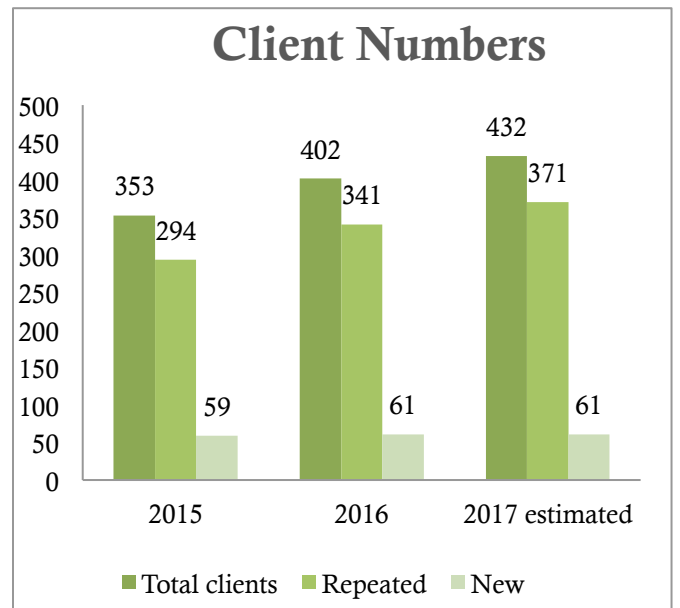
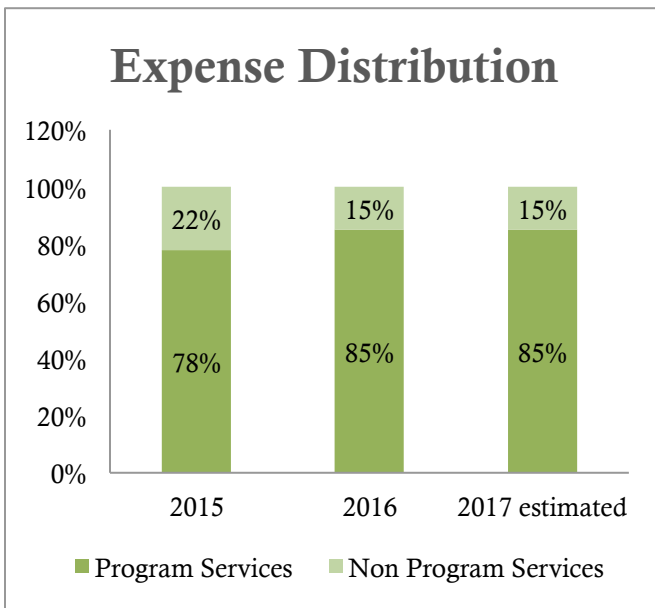
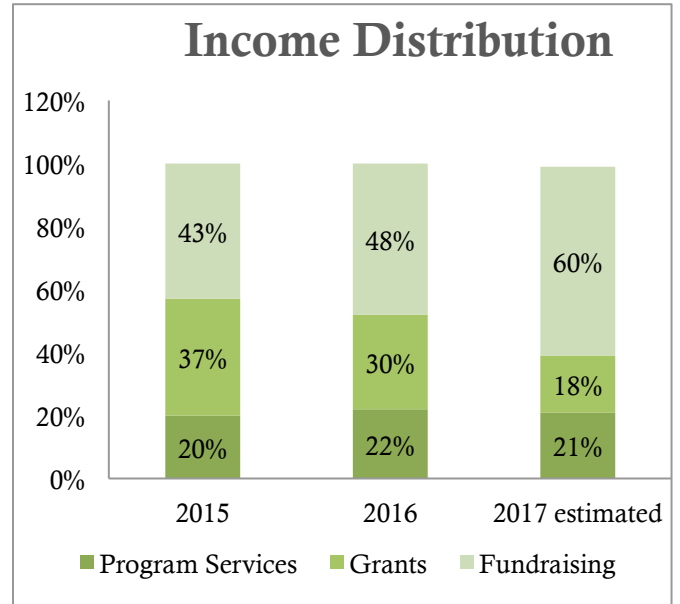
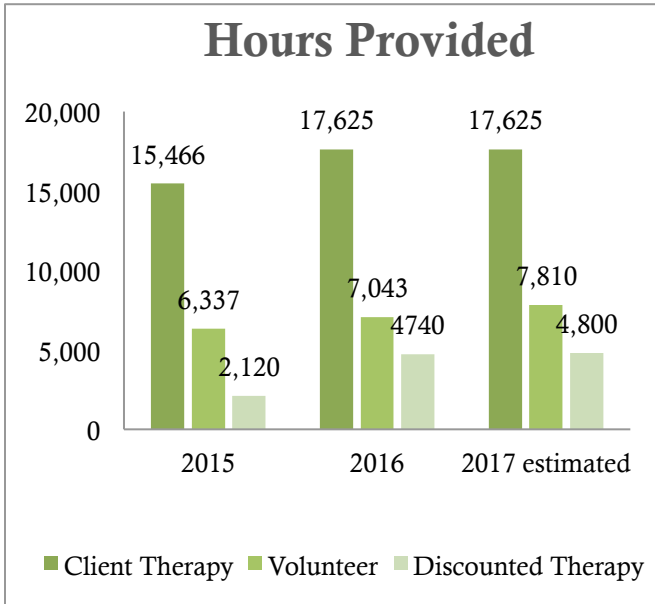
Together we help others accomplish their goals, **One Word At A Time.**

Happy Holidays!

Shilpa Shamapant

Austin Speech Labs Growth

2014-2017



Awards and Recognitions

Shilpa Shamapant accepted the clinical assistant professor position at Dell Medical School to advance speech and language stroke recovery in our community.

Shelley Adair and Shilpa Shamapant were awarded the **Stroke Hero Award** by the American Heart and Stroke Association for their fight to get stroke survivors the therapy they need for as long as they need it.



Partnerships

Austin Speech Labs partnered with the National Institute of Health Stroke Network, giving us access to clinical trials in stroke rehabilitation around the country.

We continue to join forces with other local groups in order to spread our outreach and provide more comprehensive care to our clients. This year we have built our partnerships with the following:

Dell Medical School, Texas Tower PR, University of Texas Speech and Hearing Clinic, University of Texas American Medical Student Association, University of Texas Nursing Student Association, and Baylor University Speech and Hearing Clinic

One Word At A Time

Austin Speech Labs hosted its eighth annual One Word At A Time event on May 3, 2017. Over 400 guests attended the event in honor of Stroke Awareness Month. Dr. David Paydarfar, Chair of Neurology at Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin, was the keynote speaker. Dr. Paydarfar spoke about how The University of Texas Medical Center is going to revolutionize healthcare by rethinking how hospitals and medical schools approach patient care. He hopes to create partnerships with medical, rehabilitation, and outpatient care facilities like Austin Speech Labs allowing patients to get the care they need closer to home. Dr. Paydarfar identified his current areas of concerns in health care and hopes to make a difference in providing better and more efficient care to Central Texans.

We were delighted to have Sarah Henry and Lillianne Goeders, current clients of Austin Speech Labs, share their amazing stories and triumphs. Sarah suffered a stroke at the age of 34. She has three small children and is working relentlessly to improve her ability to read, write and speak. Lillianne, a public speaker before her stroke, highlighted the fact that stroke can affect anyone at any age. She was living a healthy, vibrant life with no known risk factors and a few warning signs that no one was able to link to a stroke. She reinforced that early care is vital in stroke recovery and knowing the signs and symptoms of strokes can save lives.

A special thanks to Laura York for chairing the event, and to all of our donors and sponsors. Thanks to you all we were able to raise over \$250,000. We are so grateful for your continued support and dedication to helping stroke survivors One Word At A Time.

2018 One Word At A Time News: Join us at The Four Seasons, Wednesday, May 3rd for another inspiring evening with Austin Speech Labs. We look forward to celebrating and reminiscing about the growth and evolution of Austin Speech Labs. For more information or to become a sponsor, please visit www.austinspeechlabs.org



Clients of Austin Speech Labs



I don't have other problems, but I don't speak well. When it comes to answering a question, no, I can't do it. I go to speech every day or most every day. I try to write and sometimes I use sign language.

You can improve and I think that is hopeful.



Speech, walking, and talking have been my greatest challenges.

Every day I exercise, stretch my legs, two days a week I go to the YMCA, bike ride, walk which is exhausting, and play Wii for 30 minutes. I have been going to speech three times a week for eight years.



Probably talking has been one of my biggest challenges. I've gotten better, but it's taking a lot of work. I'm still not very smooth, but it's probably my biggest challenge.

I was in a coma for ten days, so it all happened in a flash. You know everything went sideways. I remember being moved out of Austin to Houston and then I had the stroke.

I will keep working. That's the bottom line. I'm trying to work to get better. I'm on temporary disability, so I would like to get back to work.



I am 67 years old and I had a stroke last year. The greatest challenge for me is my speaking because I used to be a public speaker. I used to conduct seminars and now I'm hesitant to go into public because of the way I speak.

Two months ago, I went to a party that our friends were having and I didn't know a whole lot of people and I was really nervous. And what I found out was even though I had trouble speaking people were willing to work with me and help me with the words I had trouble speaking. I found people were really patient.

Now I am able to go shopping and if I have trouble speaking, people are willing to give me the benefit of the doubt and work with me, even the cashiers. I make it a point to have a conversation with them. Everyone has been really helpful and patient.

Coming here, to speech recovery, people here have been really helpful and have helped me to recover much more quickly, perhaps more than I would have done on my own.



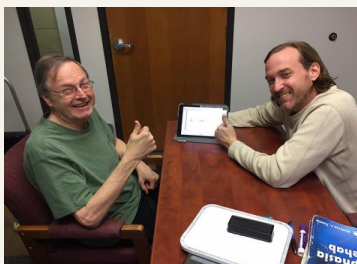
Stroke...in a wheelchair getting better. Six months later, 2nd stroke in a wheelchair again. Now, aphasia and apraxia not intelligence." (I have trouble speaking, but I'm still smart.) Humble, Texas. I come here, stay for weeks. Austin Speech

Labs helping, get better

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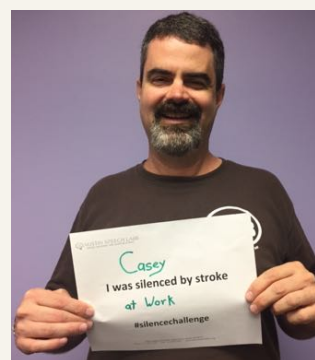


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The Silence Challenge

This October we challenged our friends, family members and community members to go Silent for Stroke Survivors. The idea was simple, go one hour without speaking and without the necessary means to communicate, other than through gestures. We surprised folks at work, at board meetings and in the wee hours of the night asking them to participate in this challenge with no warning signs. The goal of this challenge was to mimic the way a stroke often hits, without warning and leaving one without the ability to communicate.

The feedback we received from participants was eye opening. They said the challenge left them with an overwhelming sense of isolation and frustration. We even had one participant say she just wanted to go to sleep because she felt so alone. We also had a neurologist report how personally and professionally valuable the experience was because he had treated stroke survivors for years, but had never experienced their frustration firsthand.

We hope to continue the Silence Challenge next year too, with the goal of raising even more awareness. We are more effective as therapist, as caregivers and as friends when we walk in the shoes of our loved ones.



Mayra Carrera



Dr. Clay Johnston



UT American Medical Student Association



Janel Pham (former volunteer)

A Look Ahead

- Austin Marathon: February 18, 2018
- Amplify Austin: March 1, 2018
- One Word at a Time: May 3, 2018
- World Stroke Day: Oct. 29, 2018
- Year End Celebration: Nov. 10, 2018



We are so thankful to have been part of the State Employee Charitable Campaign this year. We had the opportunity to present our organization to the employees of multiple state agencies with the hopes that they would choose us as their organization to donate through their workplace giving campaign. If you know any state employees, let them know it's not too late to pick a non-profit like Austin Speech Labs for their annual giving.



Grant writer, Susan Kirby, promoting Austin Speech Labs at the State Education Charitable Campaign.

Remembering Ken

By Ashley Marnell



Ken was my first patient. I had worked at Austin Speech Labs since 2013, first as a volunteer, then as a clinical fellow hoping to gain my official license. I had worked with countless people before Ken, but he was the first patient that was mine. I was his primary clinician and I was in charge of his plan of care, medical records, and general well being in the program. I spent the weeks prior to our first boot camp poring over research articles about treatment techniques and general prognosis for his stroke. I had our first session planned perfectly. I never used the plan.

Ken had Wernicke's aphasia, meaning he had poor comprehension and speech that was fluent, but made no sense. During our first session, he didn't understand that he was supposed to follow me. This led to me having to almost coax him to my room. I had moved my desk close to the wall so it would be easy for him to sit down. However, when he came in, he proceeded to move to my side and wiggle into the seat without trying to move the table. He then motioned for me to sit down on the other side.

We were off. Our first one was spent with me asking him to do something and him answering yes and staring at me.

"How are you today, Ken?" **"Yeah."**
"I want you to say yes or no." **"Yeah."**
"Touch no." **"Yeah."**

I soon realized that Ken was doing the equivalent of what we all do when we're not sure what the other person is saying; we nod and smile. Ken was a pro. He convinced many people that he knew exactly what was going on. Sometimes he was right with you, other times he wasn't. He didn't want you to know that he didn't know. As our sessions went on, we began to understand each other more and more. We had it down to where we could have conversations. I know I didn't get everything he was saying, but I knew how he felt about it. I watched him as he learned to speak and read when he couldn't read or repeat a single word at the beginning. He would begin to mimic my mouth positions to produce sounds and words, and for someone with Wernicke's aphasia, that's a BIG deal. He helped me too.

I realized it would be easier and quicker to write things for Ken if I didn't have to turn the whiteboard around for him. I tried my hand at writing upside down, and it didn't go so well at first. I struggled with some of the letters, and Ken always let me know. I'd write one word and ask him if it was ok. If any letters were backwards, he'd glance at it sideways and say something like "I'm not so sure about that one" or "try again". He would congratulate me when I would get words completely right with a "great job", or "look at you! Even after I had been dubbed a pro by other patients and could write sentences upside down, Ken would continue to praise me for getting one word right.

Some of the times Ken was most fluent was when he was most frustrated, which was heart breaking. Here was this brilliant man who tested countless fighter jets and knew

everything about everything and yet, he struggled copying his name. He was quick to call himself stupid, and I would step in every time and tell him he wasn't. That the things he was able to do now, he couldn't even attempt when we first met. That I knew he knew and that it was in there and that if we took a break he could do it. Sometimes he would cheer up after that, others he didn't. Those were the hardest times. Times when he celebrated with me were the best. When he could do something he'd smile and say, "Look at that!" or "What do you know!" or "How about that!" His automatic responses were my favorite. On more than one occasion he would curse and then look up wide-eyed and say, "That wasn't supposed to happen".

As I've had more patients, I've realized I've picked up habits from some of them. Ken was no exception. Sometimes, as Ken would work, he would start to sing and narrate what he was doing. He did this most often as he was writing. "No, that's not the right way, Ken" he would sing in a voice that reminded me of Frank Sinatra. I do this at least ten times a day now and some patients have noticed and even began to do it too! He had no idea how parts of him were passed down through Austin Speech Labs.

In addition to his stroke, Ken had encephalopathy, meaning there was fluid in his brain where it shouldn't have been. At some point during our second boot camp together, Ken's health started to decline. As the pressure in his brain grew, his performance fluctuated. He had surgery scheduled to relieve the pressure. We worried that he would pause on a low note because of his health. But that wasn't Ken. The last week we worked together he bounced back. We ended on a great note. Ken was a fighter all his life. Unfortunately, Ken had multiple stays in the hospital and one day this past August Ken lost his fight.

I saw Ken every week Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. That spot was his, and really, it still is. I won't forget him, I can't. His habits are now my habits and I use all of the activities I came up with for him on countless patients. I think about him every time someone sits on the wrong side of the table. I'm incredibly blessed to have met him and his family. Did I enjoy every second of it? As Ken would say, "Yeah".

About three years ago, Rella had a stroke while sleeping. She had numerous heart procedures for A-fib and a clot developed. This changed our life forever. After going through the therapy at the hospital, we were fortunate to find ASL. While her physical problems were minor, her speech was affected. ASL has really helped her and we are grateful for their help. She really enjoys the sessions and looks forward to coming each day. Thanks ASL!

- John Mack, Caregiver

"It is a privilege being here. I can work on my speech. It has enabled me to participate in groups I was not able to.

- Rella Mack, Stroke Survivor



John and Rella Mack at Austin Speech Labs' Year End Event

I am a Caregiver

By Marcy Thomas

I became a caregiver in October of 2015 when my husband, Jeff, a healthy fifty year old, suffered a major stroke followed by emergency brain surgery. After that fateful day, I was no longer a stay-at-home mom and wife. I had taken on a new role as a primary caretaker and advocate.

We were living in Honolulu, Hawaii at the time raising our 3 children until Jeff's insurance ran out in March of 2016. I knew Jeff had a long way to go, and that staying in Hawaii uninsured would no longer be an option for him or my family. Suddenly faced with a critical decision, I took to the Internet in search of available options. Late one night, I stumbled upon Austin Speech Labs. I filled out the application, found us an apartment and shortly after my youngest daughter, Jeff and I relocated to Austin, Texas in June of 2016. Jeff began therapy at Austin Speech Labs almost immediately and since then we have never looked back. He attends Speech Labs five days a week along with PT/OT three times a week at Texas Neurological

Rehabilitation. Although the future seemed uncertain at times and the move to Austin proved challenging, we are grateful for Austin Speech Labs and all it has given us.

This past fall I took on yet another role, and began hosting caregiver support groups at Austin Speech Labs. The group meets three different days a week to allow as many caregivers as possible to attend. We have a wide range of caregivers whose loved ones recently endured a stroke in the last few months, and others who suffered a stroke well over 10 years ago. I feel these support groups have been beneficial as everyone brings unique experiences and resources to the group. We have discussions about everything from relationships and intimacy, to raising children, caring for aging parents (forced early retirement) and planning for retirement. I send out a weekly email to all the attendees recapping important topics we discussed and sharing additional resources available both in the greater Austin area and nationwide.

As the first fall boot camp is coming to a close, we have plans to continue the caregivers support group. If you are interested in attending please contact: Marcy Thomas at marcythomas2012@gmail.com



Caregiver Marcy Thomas and her husband/stroke survivor Jeff



Caregivers meeting for discussion and support

World Stroke Day

At Austin Speech Labs we aim to do more than just treat those who have suffered from a stroke. We also strive to educate our community on ways to prevent strokes.

On October 29, 2017 Austin Speech Labs, St. David's Healthcare, and The University of Texas Dell Medical School co-hosted our first annual World Stroke Day Health Fair. Dr. Robert Lee, M.D. (Medical Director of St. David's Rehabilitation Hospital and Advisory Board Member) and Dr. Steven Warach, M. D., PhD. (Advisory Board Member), The University of Dell Medical School, Department of Neurology, Stroke Institute, were gracious enough to come speak to our community about the latest in stroke prevention, treatments and rehabilitation. They were also generous enough to remain on site and answer questions attendees had pertaining to stroke.

The event was free to our community members, stroke survivors and caregivers. The University of Texas Nursing Students provided free health screeners; The University of Texas Speech and Hearing Department provided free hearing screeners, and we had 15 local vendors providing additional health resources for those families in need of continued support post stroke.

It was so great to see our community come together to support, educate, train and learn. The more we work together the better off our community will be. Thanks to all who attended and supported. It was a great success!





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