

## Speech Language Pathologists and Volunteers: *Together making a Difference*

By Laurie Graham, Sam Williams & Joanna Walczak

Speech Language Pathologists (SLPs) at Toronto Rehab are registered by the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists (CALPO) and many have a Master's degree in SLP. SLPs are involved in the assessment and treatment of people who have swallowing, speech and/or language difficulties.

In rehab, including Long Term Low Duration (LTLTD) programs, speech language pathologists provide activities to assist clients to regain skills lost due to stroke and acquired brain injury, particularly in the Complex Continuing Care program and through the AAC Clinic.

SLPs consult with clients, families and other healthcare team members to find creative ways to help people make the most of the skills they have. For example, a person might use speech, gestures and a communication device to express their thoughts. After communication assessment, the SLP and client may determine that the client would benefit from communication practice with a skilled conversation partner. It is for these situations that volunteers are trained by SLPs to use communication-enhancing techniques and, if applicable, to assist the client to use his/her communication device in a conversation. Volunteers may also help by pre-programming current events, comments or questions into clients' communication devices.

Typically, when an individual is unsure if they want to become an SLP, they volunteer in a variety of settings to understand more about the job to ensure it's a good fit. Some SLP programs require a minimum number of volunteer hours, supervised by an SLP. This enables the

person to acquire a better perspective of the role and responsibilities while at the same time contributing to patient's goals.

"I volunteered with Lisa McQueen an SLP at University Centre in 2000. Now I'm an SLP at Bickle Centre (BC) coaching my own volunteers. I love the creative energy the volunteers bring to the clients and I like the fact that I can give back to the profession by promoting future

SLPs," said Laurie Graham, BC Speech Language Pathologist.

Volunteering is important to clients at Toronto Rehab because those with communication problems who live in the hospital usually can't communicate quickly or easily. They often feel frustrated and discouraged when others do not know how or do not take the time to understand their meaning. Volunteer-led groups or individual sessions can bring out a client's personality, their unique voice and help them to enjoy a greater quality of life.



Back row left: Marlene Adimathra, family member, Jessica Vernon, volunteer, Wenjun Dai, volunteer and Laurie Graham, Speech Language Pathologist.  
Front row left: Evis Virgo, patient, Shirley Sukhdeo, patient, Armando LaGrotta, patient and Anna Molle, patient

## Supervisor of Volunteers Award

Kris Mamaril, Rehab Therapist in the Neuro Rehab Program, ABI service has been honored with the Supervisor of Volunteers Award 2008.

“Kris is always willing to help anyway he can in order to make volunteering fun as well as a great learning experience,” it said in the nomination letter. “Kris always tries to include volunteers anyway that he can and makes sure that you feel like a part of the team, not just an observer.”

“Kris’ positive attitude towards the volunteers is outstanding. On a regular basis, he approaches me with ideas on how to use volunteers effectively in Rehab Therapy. On top of being a supervisor for Rehab Therapy

Support volunteers, he also engages in weekly briefing sessions with the Unit Support team leader, keeping her up-to-date with things going on, on the unit,” said Lynda Watson, HC/UC Volunteer Resources Consultant.

“Kris is truly the ideal ‘supervisor of volunteers’ and I look forward to continue working with him on future volunteer initiatives,” added Lynda.

The award is handed out annually to the Toronto Rehab employee who exemplifies the qualities of a team member supporting volunteer engagement and fosters the staff-volunteer partnership which is required to develop successful volunteer contributions at Toronto Rehab.

## Welcome to the team



Kelly Campbell has joined Volunteer Resources as our new Volunteer Resources Consultant

at the E.W. Bickle Centre.

Kelly has a Volunteer Management Certificate from Humber College, and an Activation/ Gerontology Diploma from George Brown College. She has extensive experience working with volunteers in several community and health care settings and spent several years working in long-term care.

Kelly brings to the position knowledge of our organization as she completed her student placement with Toronto Rehab, and volunteered at the Bickle Centre conducting monthly orientations for new volunteers.

Kelly is a huge soccer fan, loves yoga, and travel. She spent several years living and working in Asia.

Please join us in welcoming her to our team!

## National Volunteer Week, April 19-25, 2009

Since 1943 Canadians have set aside a special week to celebrate and honor the volunteers that make our communities grow.

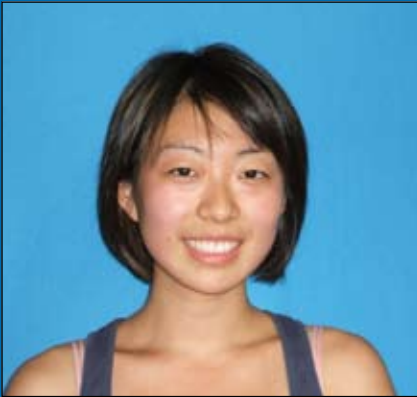
Volunteers do the work they do because they believe in causes, healthy neighborhoods, and helping others. Volunteers give their time in making life better for all of us. We are proud to celebrate our volunteers’ achievement at Toronto Rehab.

This year, Volunteer Resources will highlight who our volunteers are at Toronto Rehab, what they do and why they volunteer. Generally, our volunteer group is comprised

primarily of university and high school students who would like to experience a rehabilitation environment, retirees who want to participate in the community and former patients who wish to give back for the care they received. All of these volunteers bring with them different professional, educational, life and cultural experience. Most importantly, they enrich our patients’ Toronto Rehab experience.

On behalf of the all patients, their families and staff at Toronto Rehab: Thank you for your time and energy to help improve the lives of those we serve.

## PROFILE Yingbo Guo, *team leader*



### **How long have you been with Toronto Rehab?**

I've been with Toronto Rehab for seven months

### **What do you do at Toronto Rehab?**

I am the Team Leader for Musculoskeletal Rehab Unit Support at the Hillcrest Center.

### **What is a typical day for you at Toronto Rehab?**

A typical day entails coming onto the unit, greeting the nurses and staff asking if they need any assistance. Then I check the communications binder for questions or concerns from the volunteers. After updating the binder, I find myself actively socializing with patients. I finish the day by sharing with the other volunteers the interests of the patients I interacted with.

### **What is the best part about your volunteer work?**

The best part of volunteering is the feeling of making an impact and seeing how that impact affects the patients. I covet the sheer joy I see in a patient when we're talking about something meaningful to them, at a time when they're in such need of care. The feeling that I am bringing that extra support to them is more rewarding than anyone can imagine. I love returning to a room and having a patient remember our last interaction and feeling joy just seeing a friendly familiar face.

### **Tell us a bit about yourself:**

I've been doing road races since high school and finished my first half marathon a little while ago. It has been a dream of mine to run a full 42.2km marathon.

### **What is something most people don't know about you?**

I love being spontaneous, especially with baking. I love creating new desserts and shaping them into inanimate objects. It fits my love for sculpting and food.

## ***Together making a Difference***

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"Even though our volunteers are aspiring SLPs and have an eye on the clinical side of things, they're also able to offer patients an alternative to the typical healthcare interaction. The focus of the conversation shifts from illness and injury to non-medical, everyday interests," said Sam Williams, BC Speech Language Pathologist

## **Good bye and good luck**

Alison Caird, Manager of Volunteer Resources has left Toronto Rehab to join Serve! Canada.

"It has been my pleasure working with all of you to both improve the volunteer experience and to support patients, their families and staff. We have the highest number of volunteers and volunteer placements ever at Toronto Rehab right now. And even more important, we have a 96% satisfaction rate among our volunteers. This would not be possible without the support of you, program staff, and the volunteer resources team (Lucy, Lynda, Karen, Kelly and Joanna)," said Alison.

We are recruiting and will communicate with you once we have found a new Manager of Volunteer Resources.

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## **Staff Changes in Volunteer Resources**

*Welcome back*

At the end of January, BC Volunteer Resources Consultant Lucy McIntosh retired. Lucy worked at the Bickle Centre for over five years and made huge and important contributions to the success of the volunteer program at Complex Continuing Care. She helped volunteers make incredible strides and it was difficult for her colleagues and volunteers alike to see her go. More than 50 people helped her celebrate her entry into retirement at a party in her honour. However, recently, Lucy decided she would like to continue working part time. Lucy McIntosh has been selected as the successful candidate for the new Peer Mentor Program Coordinator position. Her vast knowledge about complex

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Next issue: Summer 2009

Toronto Rehabilitation Institute  
A University of Toronto  
Teaching and Research Hospital

## Garden Party Notice

131<sup>st</sup> Annual Garden Party  
Saturday, June 20, 2009  
12:00 – 3 p.m.  
E.W. Bickle Centre



### Welcome to our new volunteers:

Marilyn Abbott (RC)	Vladislav Gorskiy (UC)	Bienvenue Meya (BC)
Efrah Abdurahman (HC)	Hilary Gubins (BC)	Reza Mirza (UC)
Cathy Adams (BC)	Tanya Hesser (UC)	Shveta Motwani (UC)
Heather Andreadis (UC)	Sean Hsu (RC)	Kyla Napier (UC)
Scott Ardiel (BC)	Beatriz Jacques (BC)	Aleksandra Nedialkova (UC)
Asem Asouka (LC)	Andrew Jerabek (LC)	Shakiba Nero (LC)
Alana Bentham (RC)	Dhara Joshi (BC)	Jocelyn De La Cruz (BC)
Jhoy Camonayan (RC)	Chloe Kavcic (BC)	Emer O' Driscoll (BC)
Imelda Chan (UC)	Nazila Kayedpour (LC)	Elvina Oey (UC)
Mable Chan (HC)	Sarah Keso (LC)	Mikhael Quaalsamy (LC)
Gar-Ming Chen (UC)	Faraz Khan (BC)	Amil Riaz (HC)
David Cheung (BC)	Abinaya Krishnamoorthy (UC)	Nirojini Sivachandran (UC)
Beth Culotta (LC)	Tenzin Kyipa (BC)	Peter Stilwell (LC)
Arely Diaz (LC)	Kenneth Lo (HC)	David Sun (RC)
Tsewang Dolma (BC)	Alison Loney (RC)	Maggie Teixeira (BC)
Lauren Drvaric (UC)	Catherine Lotito (RC)	Glen Viola (LC)
Franziska Dudli (HC)	Tea Lulic (UC)	Heng Wang (UC)
Nevada Fenton (BC)	Flora Maker (UC)	Sophia Zhevko (BC)
Kate Foulds (RC)	Katie Marvin (HC)	
Alex Grigaitis (BC)		

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### Welcome back *continued from page 3*

continuing care will contribute to her success in this program. Lucy's role as Peer Mentor Program Coordinator will be to implement a structure to the Peer Mentor Program and provide leadership and direction to the Volunteer Mentors. We look forward to having Lucy back on board with us as she will be a wonderful asset to the Peer Mentor Program. Lucy started this new role on May 1, 2009.

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#### Volunteer Resources Mission Statement:

To promote meaningful volunteerism through real teams,  
important work and common goals.

**Choose Volunteers.**