

NOVEMBER 2025

NUCASLL

NEWS

Monthly updates from the Northwestern University Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning



We're thankful for our community

This month we're celebrating the connections and moments that make our clinic and the Northwestern community so special. We're grateful for our patients and clients, the students who bring energy and curiosity to our work, and the faculty and clinical team who make our services possible. We're equally thankful for the opportunity to serve both the NU campus and the broader community, and for the role we play in advancing the science of audiology and speech-language pathology so we can provide meaningful care today—and strengthen the field for tomorrow.

In this issue, we share stories of gratitude, tips for navigating communication differences and challenges during holiday gatherings with loved ones, and ways families can access speech, language, and hearing support.

Upcoming Events and Programs

Speech, Language, and Hearing Screening

December 12

Screenings for children ages 5-12 with an audiologist and bilingual speech-language pathologist.

Swallowing Screening

December 5

These screenings are designed to help detect swallowing difficulties early and promote communication health

Break the Blocks

1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/23, 3/9*

Did you know that improv can help with stuttering? Tweens and teens who stutter can register for this free workshop series. Adults (18+) can register for our special session on 3/9.

Spaces are limited and appointments are required. Contact us today to save your spot!

[Check out our full event calendar.](#)

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Navigating Holiday Gatherings with Care and Connection

Holiday get-togethers can be joyful, but they can also bring a mix of communication differences and challenges—especially when we’re reconnecting with loved ones we haven’t seen in a while. Hearing changes, cognitive shifts, or differences in speech or language abilities can all influence how someone participates in conversations.

Here are a few ways to make gatherings more inclusive and comfortable for everyone:

- Be mindful of background noise. Turning down music or stepping into a quieter space can make conversations easier, especially for those with hearing differences or language processing disorders.
- Rephrase rather than repeat. If someone misses something, trying different words can help more than increasing the volume.
- Slow the pace. Give extra time for responses and avoid overlapping conversation—this supports both hearing and language processing.
- Reduce multitasking. Face the person you’re speaking with and keep your mouth visible whenever possible.
- Check in. Simple questions like “Is this pace okay?” or “Can you hear me clearly?” help others feel supported and included.

With a little awareness, flexibility, and patience, holiday conversations can become meaningful moments of connection—helping every voice feel heard, valued, and understood.



Hearing Care, Heartfelt Impact

For the past nine months, CSD’s audiology faculty and students from NUCASLL have been volunteering at ReVive Center, hosting a free, walk-in hearing clinic for Chicagoans in need. ReVive provides housing, support, and care for people affected by homelessness, and this partnership has allowed NUCASLL students to expand access to hearing services while gaining hands-on experience in a real-world community setting.

Over this time, the team has served community members with ear cleanings, hearing tests, counseling, and fitting several individuals with donated hearing aids for the first time. These clinics are about more than clinical skills—they’re about connection, care, and giving back.

Here’s what some of the students had to say about their experience:

- Providing hearing healthcare at the ReVive clinic deepened my understanding of accessibility and its impact on quality of life. – Lynette L
- The clinic allowed me to connect with the community, hear patients’ stories, and leave a positive impact. – Savannah P

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Here's what some of the students had to say about their experience:

- I developed screening skills while building connections and seeing how ReVive creates a safe environment for everyone.
– Isabelle R
- It was rewarding to give back in a non-standard clinical environment and provide patients access to hearing care.” – Clare W

Through programs like this, NUCASLL continues to foster hands-on learning for students while serving the community—a full-circle partnership that brings care, education, and heart together.

"I'm grateful for student support and enthusiastic participation in our ReVive hearing health program, along with appreciating my superstar co-lead Mary Meskan."

Katherine Swem, AuD, Assistant Clinical Professor, CSD

Community Healthy Hearing Event

In November, our clinic welcomed 48 community members for a special Hearing Screening event. First- and second-year AuD students, with support from NUCASLL clinicians, offered hearing screenings, hearing aid fittings with demo devices, counseling, and even a tour of our virtual sound simulation room (ViSOR). Participants also had the chance to learn about ongoing research at CSD/NUCASLL and sign up for our Communication Research Registry. We are grateful for the opportunity to support our community and highlight the importance of hearing health, helping individuals take steps toward clearer, healthier communication.

"I am so appreciative of our graduate students' resilient attitudes and continuous commitment to their development as clinicians and future leaders in the field! I also appreciate the moments of problem-solving and creative thinking with colleagues as we strive to always center the student experience!"

*Rylie K. Young, SLPD, CCC-SLP
Assistant Clinical Professor, CSD*

Join the Communication Research Registry

Our clinic, NUCASLL, is partnering with Northwestern University's [Communication Research Registry](#) (CRR; STU00070769) to support research on the cause and treatment of conditions related to communication, learning, and development. The purpose of the CRR is to provide NUCASLL patients with valuable opportunities to participate in research studies related to communication, learning, and development at Northwestern University.

Interested in helping support research by participating? Adults can register by clicking this short [link](#) or by scanning the QR code below, which will direct you to a registration page. If you are a parent or caregiver who would like to register your child, please contact us.

commresearchregistry@northwestern.edu
(855) 354-3273.

