



COMD



USC_COMD Newsletter

Fall 2025

Top Articles:



[Danielle Varnedoe takes us through the history of the Arnold School's oldest and newest department](#)



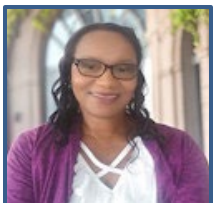
[Helicopter pilot finds new way to serve as speech-language pathologist](#)



[Speech-language pathology graduate committing to supporting children with hearing loss](#)



[50 Careers for 50 Years: Juliet Stoute-White](#)



[50 Careers for 50 Years: Angela McLeod](#)

Announcements:

Welcome to our new students admitted in 2025! In both the residential and distance education modalities, students started their graduate coursework over the summer and in the fall of 2025.

Congratulations to our USC_COMD class of 2025! 56 students graduated in August between our residential and distance education modalities for the Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology program.

[We are excited to announce two tenure track faculty positions to grow our USC_COMD community.](#)



RESEARCH

[Congratulations to ASPIRE and ASPIRE AI 2025 recipients](#)

[USC COMD congratulates professionals associated with our program who recently received ASHA's Distinguished Early Career Professional Certificate.](#)

[The students in the USC COMD Neurogenic Area of Emphasis simulated completing a Clinical Swallowing Evaluation with standardized patients at the College of Nursing's SAEL lab in July.](#)

[Communication sciences and disorders honors students](#)

[50 Careers for 50 Years: Victoria Henbest](#)

[USC announces 2025 Staff Excellence Awards recipients](#)

[USC COMD recent graduate, Amelia Mudd attended the Parkinson Voice Project's annual Lead With Intent symposium along with Clinical Instructor Laura Heidenreich in July.](#)

[50 Careers for 50 Years: K. Todd Houston](#)

[I Am Public Health: Celine Benedico](#)

[Mina Karami, COMD doctoral student and Ally Hucek HPEB doctoral student with Mike Leonard gave a talk in June for an event sponsored by Central Midlands Council on Government.](#)

[Arnold School programs shine in U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate School Rankings](#)





Newsletter

Fall 2025

Recent Student Highlights

Wesley Kephart
Ashlan Johnson
Miya Morrison

Recent Alumni Highlights

Alexis Baldwin Brown, M.S., CCC-SLP
Lauren Steen, MSP, CCC-SLP
Alexis Lawton, MS, CCC-SLP
Terria Miller, CCC-SLP

The CANDi Lab is conducting a study to investigate childhood behavior in children with fragile X syndrome. Interested in participating, reach out to the CANDi lab!

Congratulations to Play on Words: An Aphasic Drama Group for their Spring 2025 Showcase!

* Recent Grants and Publications from April 2025 – October 2025.

Faculty and Staff members are **bolded**

Mentees are underlined





Recently Awarded Grants and Awards*:

Dr. Charley Adams, University of South Carolina. *Promotion to Clinical Associate Professor*. 2025.

Dr. Meisam Arjmandi, USC Office of the Vice President for Research. [ASPIRE Grant](#), 2025.

Samin Ashjaei, Iranian American Academics and Professionals. [IAAP Scholarship](#). 2025.

Dr. Elizabeth Barnes, University of South Carolina. *Promotion to Clinical Associate Professor*. 2025.

Dr. Heather Bonilha, Medical University of South Carolina/NINDS/NIJ. *Brain Networks Supporting Oral and Pharyngeal Swallow Function after Stroke*. 2025

Dr. Gina Crosby-Quinotoa, University of South Carolina. *Promotion to Clinical Associate Professor*. 2025.

Dr. Laura Droege, University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health. *Recognition of Teaching Excellence*. 2025.

Dr. William Matchin, University of South Carolina. *Promotion to Associate Professor*. 2025.

Dr. Angela McLeod, University of South Carolina. *Promotion to Clinical Professor*. 2025.

Jessica Purrington, [USC Staff Excellence Awards](#). *Excellence in Collaboration Award*. 2025.

Joanna Scoggins, University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health. *Recognition of Teaching Excellence*. 2025.

Ariana Silverstein, University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health. *Recognition of Teaching Excellence*. 2025.



Recent Publications*:

Arjmandi, M. K., Jahn, K. N., Hem, C. B., & Arenberg, J. G. (2025). Relationship Between Psychophysical Tuning Curves and Vowel Identification in Noise in Children and Adults With Cochlear Implants. *J Speech Lang Hear Res*, 68(5), 2623-2633.
https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_JSLHR-24-00270

Behroozmand, R., Khoshhal Mollasaraei, Z., Nejati, V., Daliri, A., & **Fridriksson, J.** (2025). Vocal and articulatory speech control deficits in individuals with post-stroke aphasia. *Sci Rep*, 15(1), 13350. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-96040-4>

Busby, N., **Kristinsson, S.**, Johnson, L., Roth, R., Hillis, A. E., **Newman-Norlund, R.**, Rorden, C., **Fridriksson, J.**, & **Bonilha, L.** (2025). White Matter Hyperintensity Load Independent From the Stroke Lesion Is Associated With Chronic Aphasia Severity and Treatment Outcome. *Stroke*. <https://doi.org/10.1161/STROKEAHA.124.046710>

Busby, N., **Newman-Norlund, S.**, **Sayers, S.**, **Wilson, S.**, **Riccardi, N.**, **Fridriksson, J.**, **Newman-Norlund, R.**, Teghipco, A., Rorden, C., Bakos, L., & Bonilha, L. Damage to white matter networks resulting from small vessel disease and the effects on cognitive function. *Sci Rep* 15, 27736 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-13813-7>

Cooper, E., **Fitton, L.**, & Werfel, K. (2025). Hearing Loss Health Literacy in Speech-Language Pathologists: Impact of Academic Training and On-the-Job Experience. *J Speech Lang Hear Res*, 68(2), 740-761.
https://doi.org/10.1044/2024_JSLHR-24-00185

Farahbod, H., Rogalsky, C., Keator, L. M., Cai, J., Pillay, S. B., LaCroix, A. N., **Fridriksson, J.**, Binder, J. R., Venezia, J. H., Saberi, K., & Hickok, G. (2025). Audiovisual Synchrony in Left-hemisphere Brain-lesioned Individuals with Aphasia. *J Cogn Neurosci*, 1-12.
https://doi.org/10.1162/jocn_a_02316

Friedman, D. B., Ek, C., **Neils-Strunjas, J.**, Tanner, A., Hebert, J. R., Donelle, L., Levkoff, S. E., Hucek, F. A., Yelton, B., & Porter, D. E. (2025). "Courtesy, respect, and follow through": a mixed methods evaluation of faculty members' experiences, needs, and approaches to research collaborations. *Frontiers in Education*, 9.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1493313>

Haisley, L. D., Hantzsch, L., Glick, A. R., Turner, J., Sung, S., Swanson, M. R., Wolff, J. J., Burrows, C. A., Botteron, K. N., Dager, S. R., Estes, A. M., Flake, L., McKinstry, R. C., Pandey, J., Schultz, R. T., Shen, M. D., John, T. S., Zwaigenbaum, L., Hazlett, H. C., Marrus, M., **Will, E. A.** . . . Elison, J. T. (2025). Adaptive Functioning Development in Infants With Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum. *Pediatrics*, 155(5).
<https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2024-066555>



- Hammond, L., Christensen, T., Fridriksson, J., & den Ouden, D. B.** (2025). Assessing Functional Communication in Persons With Aphasia: A Scoping Review of Formal and Informal Measures. *Int J Lang Commun Disord*, 60(3), e70051. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1460-6984.70051>
- Klusek, J., Jenner, L., Hogan, A., Friedman, L.,** Fairchild, A., and Roberts, J. (2025). Depression Symptom Trajectories in Mothers With the FMR1 Premutation Vary by CGG Repeat Length: A Longitudinal Study of 73 Women Spanning 20-75 Years of Age. *American Journal of Medical Genetics Part B: Neuropsychiatric Genetics*, e33033. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajmg.b.33033>
- Lancaster, H. S., **Smolak, E.**, Milne, A., Gordon, K. R., Emerson, S. N., & Selin, C. (2025). Analyzing the Impact of Four Cognitive Constructs on Nonverbal Intelligence Test Performance: Implications for Children With Neurodevelopmental Disorders. *Lang Speech Hear Serv Sch*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1044/2025_LSHSS-24-00056
- Lee, J., West, D., Pellegrini, C., Wei, J., Wilcox, S., **Neils-Strunjas, J.**, Rudisill, A. C., Friedman, D. B., Marquez, D. X., Dzwierzynski, J., Balls-Berry, J., Gajadhar, R., & Yang, C. H. (2025). Walking Interventions and Cognitive Health in Older Adults: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials. *Am J Health Promot*, 8901171251328858. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08901171251328858>
- Li, K., Ghosal, R., Zhang, D. L., Li, Y. K., Lohman, M. C., Brown, M. J., Merchant, A. T., Yang, C. H., **Neils-Strunjas, J.**, Friedman, D. B., & Wei, J. K. (2025b). The Associations of Sensory Impairment With 10-Year Risk of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease: The Health and Retirement Study, 2010-2020. *Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and Neurology*, 38(2), 94-105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/08919887241275042>
- Matchin, W.**, Almeida, D., Hickok, G., & Sprouse, J. (2025). A Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study of Phrase Structure and Subject Island Violations. *J Cogn Neurosci*, 37(2), 414-442. https://doi.org/10.1162/jocn_a_02266
- Nemati, S., Arjmandi, M., Neils-Strunjas, J., Newman-Norlund, R.D., Newman-Norlund, S.E., Droege, L., Bonilha, L., & Fridriksson, J. (2025). White matter integrity of hearing and cognitive impairments in healthy aging. *NeuroImage*, 310, 121135, 1053-8119. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2025.121135>
- Rangus, I., Busby, N., Teghipco, A., Roth, R. W., Wilmskoetter, J., Rorden, C., Hillis, A. E., **den Ouden, D. B., Newman-Norlund, R., Fridriksson, J., & Bonilha, L.** (2025). Impact of White Matter Hyperintensities on Nonverbal Cognition Through Structural Disconnections in Poststroke Aphasia. *Stroke*. <https://doi.org/10.1161/STROKEAHA.124.049058>



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Wall, C. A., Shic, F., **Will, E. A.**, Wang, Q., & Roberts, J. E. (2025). Similar Gap-Overlap Profiles in Children with Fragile X Syndrome and IQ-Matched Autism. *J Autism Dev Disord*, 55(3), 891-903. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-024-06245-1>

