

2016-17 Tarjan Center Lecture Series Summary Report

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What were the lectures in 2016-17?

The 2016-2017 Tarjan Center lecture series delivered 8 lectures from October 2016 to June 2017. Lecture topics were related to interventions and research on autism spectrum disorders (ASD) as well as advocacy and personal experiences with disability. A total of 328 professionals, students, and family members attended, ranging from 25 to 55 individuals ($M = 41$). The number of evaluations completed ranged from 10 to 38 per lecture, with an overall response rate of 66%.

This report summarizes feedback received through a paper evaluation given at the end of the lecture. Responses ranged from 10 to 38. Table 1 provides lecture date, topic, number who attended the lecture, and number evaluations received.



November 2016 lecture, Dr. Green

What roles did participants represent?

The majority of respondents identified as student/trainee or UCLA staff. Participant disciplines tended to be in psychology and social work. Based on evaluations, family members of people with disabilities were also in attendance, particularly at lectures on evidence based social skills and sensory over-responsivity. Table 2 displays the roles identified by respondents by lecture topic.

Table 1. Attendance and evaluations completed by lecture

| Date | Topic | Number in attendance (n=328) | Number completing evaluations (n=217) |
|-----------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| October | Evidence-Based Social Skills Training for Youth with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities | 52 | 38 |
| November | Sensory Over Responsivity and the Brain: Neuroimaging Insights Into Sensory Processing in ASD | 48 | 32 |
| January | ChatterBaby: Speech Recognition of Infants to Identify Distress and Developmental Delays | 25 | 10 |
| February | Genetically Informed Biomarkers of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Insights Gained from Dup15q Syndrome | 45 | 34 |
| March | Linking Therapy to Outcomes: Potential Successes and Areas of Need for Children with ASD | 36 | 31 |
| April | Insights from Self-Advocates about Research and Interventions for People with Developmental Disabilities | 32 | 20 |
| May | Broadening the Training Experience: Cultivating Champions in Public Policy for People with Disabilities | 45 | 21 |
| June | Early Biomarkers of Risk for ASD: Recent Advances in Neuroimaging | 45 | 31 |

Note. Respondents could select more than one option.

Table 2. Participant roles represented by lecture

| | Tarjan Center trainee | Student/ trainee | Mental health/ Medical professional | Faculty | UCLA staff | Family member of PWD | Other | Total |
|---|-----------------------------|---------------------|--|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Evidence- Based Social Skills Training for Youth with Autism | 3 | 1 | 13 | 1 | 12 | 10 | 4 | 44 |
| Sensory Over- responsivity | 4 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 39 |
| Speech Recognition of Infants | 2 | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Biomarkers of ASD | 3 | 14 | 2 | 6 | 12 | - | 3 | 40 |
| Linking Therapy to Outcomes | | 10 | 1 | 2 | 20 | 2 | | 35 |
| Insights from Self- advocates | 3 | 10 | 3 | - | 5 | 1 | 4 | 26 |
| Broadening the Training Experience | - | 10 | 6 | 1 | 9 | - | 2 | 28 |
| Early Biomarkers of Risk for ASD | 1 | 13 | 3 | 3 | 7 | - | 6 | 33 |
| Total | 16 | 70 | 33 | 16 | 75 | 21 | 25 | 256 |

Who were the presenters?

The Tarjan Center lecture series highlighted the work and expertise of several campus and community members including:

- **Elizabeth Laugeson, Psy.D.**, Training Director, *Tarjan Center*, Assistant Clinical Professor, *UCLA Semel Institute*, Director, *UCLA PEERS Clinic*. (October 2016).
- **Shulamite Green, Ph.D.**, Postdoctoral Fellow and Licensed Clinical Psychologist, Ahmanson-Lovelace Brain Mapping Center, *UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior*. (November 2016).
- **Ariana Anderson, Ph.D.**, Assistant Research Statistician, *Semel Institute at UCLA*. (January 2017).
- **Shafali Spurling Jeste, M.D.**, Associate Professor in Psychiatry, Neurology, and Pediatrics, *UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine*. (February 2017).
- **Stephanny F.N. Freeman, Ph.D.**, Clinical Professor, *UCLA Department of Child Psychiatry*, Co-Director, *Early Childhood Partial Hospitalization Program*. (March 2017).
- **Panel of self-advocates: Deaka McClain, Andrew Hain, Kecia Weller, and Susan Hain.**
Moderator: Olivia Raynor, Ph.D., Director, *Tarjan Center*. (April 2017).
- **Panel of UCLA Tarjan Center Diversity Fellows:**
Artha Gillis, M.D., Ph.D., Post-Doctoral Fellow, *Psychiatry & Biobehavioral Sciences*; **Melina Melgoza**, BA Candidate; **Violeta Chavez-Serrano**, BA Candidate, *Sociology*. (May 2017).
Moderator: Olivia Raynor, Ph.D., Director, *Tarjan Center*. (May 2017).
- **Mirella Dapretto, Ph.D.**, Professor, *Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences*. (June 2017).



March 2017 lecture, Dr. Freeman

“Great speaker! Very well presented, speaker told a story and kept the audience captivated. Amazing presenter!” – February 2016 participant

“Good speaker, very engaging and interested in her topic! Lively.”
- March 2017 participant

Across all lectures, presenters were viewed as knowledgeable (95%-100%), understandable (95%-100%), well organized (90%-100%), and responsive to questions (90%-100%). Comments indicate speakers who were passionate about the topic and used storytelling/case examples were viewed as great presenters. Respondents also liked the panel format.



April 2017 panel of self-advocates

Learning and Understanding

“Super! Learned a lot. Thank you for doing this.”
– October 2016 lecture participant

“I don’t have much of a background in therapy services and this was very clear and helpful. Learned a lot.” – March 2017 lecture participant

Respondents reported increased knowledge, learning, and understanding related to the lecture topic areas. The following lists the specific types of knowledge gained, learning, and understanding that occurred as a result of the training.

Lecture participants increased their knowledge of:

- evidence-based social skills training for youth with autism and other developmental disabilities (UCLA PEERS program) increased (97%).
- sensory over-responsivity and the brain neuroimaging insights into sensory processing in ASD increased (100%).

- the ChatterBaby algorithm for infant speech recognition to predict if a baby is crying has increased (100%).
- genetically informed biomarkers of Autism Spectrum Disorder (97%).
- the definition of a biomarker and the challenges around biomarker development in ASD has increased (97%).
- issues important to individuals with disabilities and their families at the local, state and national levels (100%).
- different developmental trajectories in brain growth in infants who later develop ASD (97%).
- recent findings of altered brain function and connectivity in infants at high familial risk for ASD (100%).

Similarly, respondents learned:

- the role of the brain in over-responding to sensory stimuli (100%).
- how to assess implications of speech recognition algorithms can be used to predict analytics in other disorders, including schizophrenia and stroke (100%).
- how to engage trainees in advocacy work as a means to enhance their professional development and future careers (95%).

More specifically, respondents felt they could identify:

- the relationship between broad service provision for younger children with autism and shorter term outcomes (97%).
- strategies for engaging self-advocates in research (85%).
- ways to disseminate research so that it is usable and meaningful to self-advocates (85%).

As a result of the training, respondents understood:

- the common social challenges faced by youth with developmental disabilities (97%).
- evidence-based methods for teaching social skills (97%).
- what sensory over-responsivity is and who is at risk for it (100%).

- how the MHealth smart-phone apps are used for large-scale data collection of developmental and vocal history (100%).
- the potential for brain based biomarkers to improve clinical trials in ASD (97%).
- the broader implications of the strengths and weaknesses of current community services (97%).
- the research process from the perspective of self-advocates (90%).

Additionally, participants became:

- familiar with longitudinal research on therapy for autism spectrum disorders and understand the diversity of outcomes and factors involved in change (100%).
- More aware of the Tarjan Center's advocacy for policies (100%).

Usefulness, Satisfaction, and Applicability

“Very valuable and should have this more often in the research community!”

- April participant

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“I especially enjoyed the perspective of an impacted parent and healthcare provider.”

- May participant

Nearly all respondents across all lecture topics found the information presented useful. Likewise, respondents were satisfied with the training (range = 90%-100%). With the exception of one lecture topic, the large majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would apply the information/skills learned to their professional/daily activities See Table 3.



February 2017 lecture, Dr. Jeste

Table 3. Usefulness, satisfaction, and applicability of lecture information

| Lecture topic | Useful information | Satisfied | Apply information/skills |
|---|--------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Evidence-Based Social Skills Training for Youth with Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities | 100% | 100% | 95% |
| Sensory Over Responsivity and the Brain: Neuroimaging Insights Into Sensory Processing in ASD | 100% | 97% | 93% |
| ChatterBaby: Speech Recognition of Infants to Identify Distress and Developmental Delays | 100% | 100% | 70% |
| Genetically Informed Biomarkers of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Insights Gained from Dup15q Syndrome | 97% | 97% | 88% |
| Linking Therapy to Outcomes: Potential Successes and Areas of Need for Children with ASD | 100% | 100% | 97% |
| Insights from Self-Advocates about Research and Interventions for People with Developmental Disabilities | 100% | 90% | 95% |
| Broadening the Training Experience: Cultivating Champions in Public Policy for People with Disabilities | 100% | 95% | 90% |
| Early Biomarkers of Risk for ASD: Recent Advances in Neuroimaging | 97% | 97% | 97% |

Future trainings

The Tarjan Center lecture series is well attended and well received. Comments from the evaluations provide input into future trainings and planning. Some of the more common recommendations include:

- Provide practical steps, case examples, age specific examples

- Longer training for complex topics
- More time for Q and A
- More representation of people with color (in speakers and audience)

Specific ideas for future trainings included:

- New clinical interventions for ASD
- Review of psychopharmacology for children with autism and/or ID
- Panel of parents of children with disabilities

Future Evaluation

In addition to questions required by our granting agency, lecture evaluations would benefit from a review in relation to five-year plan. For example, it may be beneficial to include more demographic questions such as race and ethnicity to determine whether audiences represent the greater campus and local communities. While not an absolute measure, attendance and evaluation response rates indicate the lecture series is an important mechanism for attaining training goals and increasing exposure of the Tarjan Center training program and UCLA research and interventions.