

# BATON ROUGE SPEECH AND HEARING FOUNDATION

## NOW HEAR THIS!

SPRING EDITION 2010



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### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

As you can see, Spring has sprung here at BRSHF! It seems like this season gets busier every year, but that's a good thing from where we stand. These activities ensure our ability to deliver on our mission to increase clients' capacity for independent communication and social interaction for fifty more years.

Mark your calendars for these exciting events coming up at BRSHF!

- Plans are well underway for our thirty-ninth annual **Volunteer Activists luncheon**. The fundraiser is scheduled for 11 a.m. on Friday, May 7 at the Crowne Plaza. Tickets, tables, ads, and sponsorships are now available! Contact Lauren Michaud at [VA@brshf.org](mailto:VA@brshf.org) or 343-4232.
- **Frocks and Frolics**, a first-time event hosted by Quota International at White Oak Plantation, will benefit BRSHF's Autism programs. On April 25, this "Chapeaux and Gateaux" themed high tea will feature a cake competition, musicians, photographers, vendors, and fun for ladies and girls of all ages. More info is available at [www.quotabr.org](http://www.quotabr.org).
- It's our birthday! This year marks our **50th Anniversary** serving those with hearing and speech challenges in the Baton Rouge community. Our reunion celebration is going to be a day of fun for all ages here at BRSHF on Sunday, September 12th. Whether you were around for the first ten years of our existence, or have visited in the last ten days, you won't want to miss it!

Thanks for remaining engaged with us as we continue to provide quality speech and audiology services to our community! Take care and please keep in touch.

*Melissa Jumeau*

### 2010 Volunteer Activists

Ralph Bender

Monica Brasher

Dede Ferrara

Bettie Baker Miller

Reverend Mary E. Moody

Roger A. Moser

Manjari Patel

Dan Reed

Francen Reeher

Felix Weill

## GIRL SCOUT GOES GOLD FOR BRSHF

*Abbey Simoneaux, a senior at St. Joseph's Academy, chose BRSHF as the site for her Girl Scout Gold Award - the first Animal Fun Fair held at the Foundation on March 19th. She also lead a Beta Club supplies drive which provided almost all the items from our Amazon.com wish list! Here's Abbey's story...*

Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation has touched my family in ways that I can't begin to describe. I chose the organization for my project primarily because of their employees' personal dedication and commitment to helping others be their best in life, even at a young age. When Mrs. Juneau asked me to observe some of the classes over my Mardi Gras break, I didn't really know what to expect. BRSHF is an amazing organization! If I could sum up what I observed in one word, it would be: selfless. "Selfless" accurately describes everyone I have interacted with there—those who make that organization the fantastic learning environment it is for the 3 to 5 year-olds who are privileged to attend. Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation changes lives—not just children's lives, but families' lives—and I just wanted to show my appreciation for the unc customary acts of kindness they perform every day.

**- Abbey Simoneaux, Girl Scout Ambassador of Troop 340**



*The Wish List donations Abbey & the SJA Beta Club collected covered the entire floor of Melissa's office!*

## SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT WORKERS

BRSHF prides itself on the quality of our staff. However, you may not realize how critical our group of student workers are to the specialized services we provide. College students help out in our Therapeutic Language Center (TLC), including our Group Language preschool program and our Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. Each semester, about 30 students are trained to work as aides in the classrooms or administer therapy under the supervision of BRSHF's Board Certified Behavior Analyst.

Scott Lepley, a psychology major at LSU, has been an ABA therapist in our program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders for almost a year. Despite his busy schedule as Activities Coordinator of Best Buddies LSU, Scott made time for this job because he wanted to gain experience with special needs children, especially those with autism. He enjoys the work because, even though he works with the same child, every day is different. The child could work on the same skill for days with no success, but the feeling Scott gets when the child finally masters it is what keeps Scott coming to work every day. "Watching the children make progress right before my eyes, and knowing I had a hand in that, is one of the most amazing experiences I've ever had," Scott says. "That's what keeps me going when a child is having a rough patch." In fact, Scott's favorite BRSHF stories all relate to the progress his students have made. "I had one child go from tantruming every time I walked into the room, to giving me a hug at the beginning of every therapy session." Experience like that, Scott says "has made this much more than a job - the kids at BRSHF have won me over big time!"



*Scott works one-on-one with a student as part of BRSHF's Discrete Trial Teaching program*



*Mary plays with a student on the playground.*

Mary Loftus, a 2009 LSU graduate applying to the Masters in Social Work program in the fall, has worked on both sides of our Therapeutic Language Center - group language classes as well as our Discrete Trial Training program for autistic children. She was drawn to the opportunity to develop skills in working with children, and also because of learning, growth, and laughter that accompany working with kids. She says working with the children at BRSHF is incredibly rewarding because "the kids learn so quickly and really care about you. I never leave the Foundation feeling like I've had a bad day or that my time wasn't well spent." Some of Mary's favorite stories from BRSHF revolve around eating. "I am always amazed by the progress kids make during snack time. In one of my groups, the first word I heard from a little girl was 'cookie.' It made my day!"

## WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO: GRACIE'S STORY

"We live in West Baton Rouge Parish, so it's hard to get Early Steps providers out there. Gracie was at the level where she needed physical therapy, occupational therapy, as well as speech therapy. I didn't know what to do, she wasn't even pointing, just grunting. I was literally out of options, financially too. I didn't know what I was going to do. A contact I had at McMains referred me to Ann Nader here in late 2008. This school really has been a blessing for us, because Gracie never would've achieved the level of accomplishment she has without the Foundation. It's been so much more than just speech – she's overcome separation anxiety, she's interacting and getting along with other children. I never thought she'd be speaking full sentences. Before we came here, she had major difficulties feeding, and now thanks to Occupational Therapy, she's putting food on a spoon & putting it in her mouth herself. I'm so happy about the progress she's made. It's like we're a family here!"

- Sandy, Gracie's Mom



## VOLUNTEER ACTIVISTS LUNCHEON - MAY 7, 2010

You're invited to join us for BRSHF's primary fundraiser, the Volunteer Activists luncheon, scheduled for 11 a.m. Friday, May 7 at the Crowne Plaza! The ten activists listed on the front page were announced at a Wine & Cheese Reception on March 24, and will be honored among their families, friends and peers. Secretary of State and 2009 Volunteer Activist Jay Dardenne will deliver a keynote address about the importance of Baton Rouge Speech & Hearing Foundation's work in the community. We're also excited to announce that Lee Michaels Fine Jewelry and Iberiabank have signed on as our first ever title sponsors.

Tickets, tables, ads and sponsorships are now available by emailing [VA@brshf.org](mailto:VA@brshf.org) or calling Lauren at 343-4232. More information is also available at [www.brshf.org/va\\_luncheon.asp](http://www.brshf.org/va_luncheon.asp).



presented by

Lee Michaels **IBERIABANK**  
FINE JEWELRY & DISTINCTIVE GIFTS

## QUOTA INTERNATIONAL—SUPPORTING BRSHF FOR 50 YEARS



*Quota International's Baton Rouge chapter founded Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation along with the Junior League in 1960. Bobbie Carey, BRSHF Board Member 1996-2002 and Volunteer Activist 2003, served as International President of Quota in 1996-1997. She spoke with us about the relationship between the two organizations, and about Frocks & Frolics, Quota's new fundraiser scheduled for April 25 at White Oak Plantation, benefiting BRSHF's Autism program!*

I have personally been part of the Foundation in many ways—as a graduate student, board member, speech pathologist in private practice, and Quota member. I have personally witnessed the miracles that the many talented professionals at BRSHF have consistently performed with hard work and the right approach, particularly early intervention with children with autism, for over 25 years. Now that I work as a corporate communications consultant, I believe in the work of the Foundation even more because I know how important communication skills are to career success.

When I was President of Quota's International organization, I championed infant hearing screening and through Quota's efforts, infant hearing screening started to take hold. When I saw the first young child at the Foundation with a cochlear implant learning language rapidly thanks to implants and early diagnosis, I was really touched personally. It brought home to me that each of us can do just a little and it can improve the lives of many.

Quota International of Baton Rouge honors the overall service goals of the Quota International organization—to help individuals with speech and hearing challenges and to assist disadvantaged women and children. The Foundation meets both service objectives. BRSHF's program for children diagnosed with autism is unique in our community and has outstanding results, and for those reasons, Quota members are particularly drawn to it. These children require early intervention and a multidisciplinary approach, and the Foundation provides these services with a lot of caring for these children and their families. Our members know this first hand, having supported the Foundation with funding and Board leadership for many years. It was logical that we name BRSHF the beneficiary of the first Frocks and Frolics on April 25th. It was the beneficiary of the funds from many Open Door Tours, our fundraiser for 58 years. We're excited to partner with BRSHF again to support the important work that goes on there for the Baton Rouge community!



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Baton Rouge, LA 70802



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The **Baton Rouge Speech and Hearing Foundation's** (BRSHF) mission is to increase our clients' capacity to reach their optimum levels of independent communication and social interaction through the use of research based best practices, leading technology, and highly-trained professionals. Current diagnostic and therapeutic services offered at BRSHF include:

#### Therapeutic Language Center

- Speech/Language Evaluation
- Individual Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Group Language Therapy for Preschool Children
- Social Language Skills Group
- Program for children diagnosed with

#### Autism Spectrum Disorders

- Group Language Therapy combined with Discrete Trial Teaching (Using the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis)

#### Early Intervention Services

- Early Steps Evaluations
- Comprehensive Development Assessment
- Educational Diagnostic Services

#### Audiology Services

- Testing & Evaluation
- Hearing Aids & Assistive Listening Devices
- Specialized Services
- Hearing Protection & Related Products
- Troubleshooting of Cochlear Implants

**Want to know more? Visit us on the web at [www.brshf.org](http://www.brshf.org)!**