

RITEVIEW

Fall / Winter



Kristin Uhler, Ph.D.
Kelley Family/Schlessman
Family Scottish Rite Masons
Chair in Childhood
Language Disorders

New Year Reflections and Transitions

As we begin a new year, it is a fitting time to reflect on past accomplishments and look ahead to the opportunities and challenges that await us. This season invites us to embrace new ideas and approaches to further our mission of supporting children and families in need.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Scottish Rite Masons and the Scottish Rite Board of Trustees for their steadfast commitment and leadership. Your support has been instrumental in advancing our programs and services, ensuring that we continue to make a meaningful impact.

We extend our gratitude to the early interventionists, learning specialists, and speech-language pathologists whose dedication transforms lives every day. With your expertise and unwavering compassion, you tirelessly support children and their families as they navigate speech, language, and learning challenges to achieve their full potential.

This edition of *RiteView* showcases the outstanding efforts of our community. The articles featured here highlight the collaborative spirit that characterizes our organization, ranging from innovative initiatives to the steadfast commitment of our partners and clinicians.

As we move forward, I want to take a moment to acknowledge a change within our leadership team. On behalf of the Scottish Rite Board of Trustees, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Bryant Harris for his service as Executive Secretary. Since June 2020, Bryant has been instrumental in modernizing our systems and processes, bringing the Scottish Rite Foundation into the digital age. We are grateful for his contributions and wish him much success in his future endeavors.

I am also pleased to introduce my new colleague, Scott A. Bates, who has joined us as the Secretary to the Board. Scott brings a wealth of experience to this role, having served in the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power program before earning his Bachelor's degree and MBA while working full-time. His career includes leadership roles in marketing, IT, non-profit organizations, and real estate, and I am confident that his expertise will greatly benefit the Scottish Rite Foundation as we advance our mission together.

As we embark on this new chapter, let us continue to work together, guided by a shared vision of creating brighter futures for the children and families we serve. I eagerly anticipate what we can achieve together in the coming year.

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Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado Looking Ahead: A New Year of Opportunities



Scott Bates, 33°, Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado

As we begin a new year, it's an ideal time to reflect on our past accomplishments and plan for the future. This period of transition allows us to learn from our experiences and set ambitious goals, just as our founders did over 70 years ago. With renewed focus, we can align our strengths and ideas to create a meaningful impact.

A Fond Farewell to Bryant Harris

We extend our gratitude to Bryant Harris for his invaluable service as Executive Secretary since 2020. His efforts have modernized the Scottish Rite Foundation's systems and enhanced its public presence. Although he moved on in November, Bryant remains an active and cherished member of the Scottish Rite and the Grand Lodge of Colorado.

Celebrating Progress

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2024, we eagerly anticipate the introduction of new initiatives approved by the Scottish Rite Board of Trustees in the upcoming edition of the RiteView.

Here to Support

My priority is to ensure that RiteCare partners have the resources they need to minimize obstacles and maximize their impact. Every hour saved from red tape is another hour dedicated to changing lives. Our clinicians, therapists, and specialists are transforming the futures of children and families—work that truly inspires us all. Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can assist you in any way. Together, we will make 2025 a year of growth and opportunity.



Karl Hinkle, 33°, Deputy of the Supreme Council & President of the Board of Trustees, Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado
Scott Bates, 33°, Secretary to the Board of Trustees

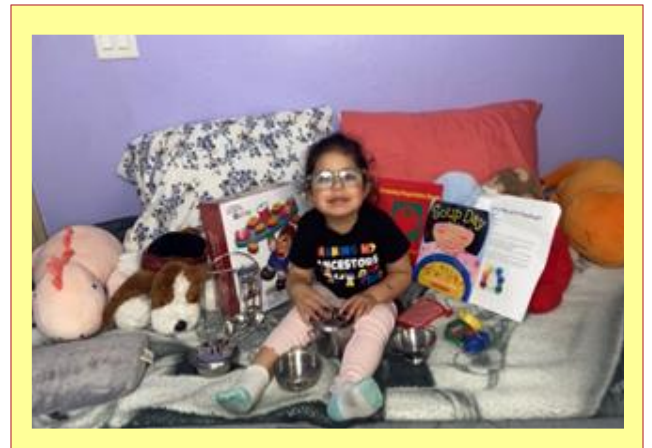




Treasure Chest News

Hello everyone! As fall comes to a close, we've enjoyed the start of another school year with Centro. Thanks to increased grant funding from the generous support of the Scottish Rite, we've welcomed more children into our Treasure Chest program. It has been incredibly rewarding to see the excitement of both parents and children as they discover the materials and activities they receive each month. Parents have already shared how much they look forward to playing with their children in ways that are both fun and educational.

One parent mentioned her excitement about adding more board games to our bags this year. She told us that as soon as they brought the bag home, they played the game together, practicing skills like taking turns, teamwork, counting, and gracefully handling losing.



Another parent expressed her gratitude for including materials and books in both English and Spanish. She was thrilled to find books she could read to her child without needing help from her older children. Her family has enjoyed the books so much that they've been reading them repeatedly.

We are proud to share that, with the expansion of the Treasure Chest program, we've served over 100 children this year! A heartfelt thank you to the Scottish Rite Foundation for their ongoing support, which positively impacts the lives of many children in our communities. We look forward to continuing this work with their help throughout the school year.

Submitted by: Lisa Morgan, Treasure Chest Program Coordinator, Grand Junction

Children's Colorado Therapy Care Southern Colorado

Children's Colorado Telstar Speech and Learning Therapies in Colorado Springs (COS) continue to provide access to therapy services for patient families in the southern and Front Range areas of Colorado.

We continue to provide individual and group patient care for pediatric populations in a variety of areas: receptive/expressive language disorders, articulation disorders, stuttering, social/pragmatic language disorders (secondary to Autism), childhood apraxia of speech, phonological disorders, feeding/swallowing disorders, deaf and hard of hearing (DHH), ventilation and tracheostomy supported, those requiring augmentative alternative communication (AAC), learning disorders such as dyslexia, and many more.

During the Winter/Spring of 2024 and 2025, members of our COS Speech team will provide internship supervision opportunities for graduate students. This initiative allows us to participate in training the next generation of speech-language pathologists. In the summer of 2024, we expanded our COS speech therapy team by adding a new clinician to support our feeding therapy and general speech/language needs. The Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado remains a vital resource for families in southern Colorado, ensuring that their children receive high-quality, evidence-based interventions necessary for the proper development of speech, language, learning, and feeding skills. For this reason, I, along with my team members, their patients, and their families are eternally grateful.



Submitted by: Matt Holmberg, RiteCare Program Director Children's Therapy Care, Southern Colorado



Children's Speech & Reading Center



2024 has been a year of change and growth for the Children's Speech and Reading Center (CSRC). This year, CSRC hired new staff to better serve the children of Northern Colorado through both in-person and telehealth therapy services. Over the course of this year, we have more than doubled the number of children receiving speech-language-learning therapy with the help of scholarships from the Scottish Rite Foundation (SRF). We are grateful for SRF's generous support for individualized therapy. Additionally, CSRC's Early Literacy program has expanded to six area preschools, providing free lessons to four-year-olds during the school year in preparation for kindergarten. A total of 84 children are participating in the Early Literacy program at the following preschools: The Family Center/La Familia, Northside Aztlan Preschool, Colorado State University Early Childhood Center, Teaching Tree Early Childhood Learning Center – Fort Collins, Teaching Tree Early Childhood Learning Center – Loveland, and Thompson Valley Preschool.

Thank you to the Scottish Rite Foundation for your continued support of CSRC's mission to build a solid foundation for children's learning success!

Submitted by: Cheryl Campbell, RiteCare Program Director Children's Speech and Reading Center, Ft. Collins/Loveland

Montrose Regional Health

This year, our SRF Appraisal Committee suggested we bring back the traditional *Breakfast with Santa* at the Masonic Lodge for our annual holiday party. After trying other formats in recent years, we're excited to return to this beloved tradition and hope for a great turnout.

Our Montrose pediatric clinic has been especially busy this fall and winter. While I miss the sunlight on my evening commutes, it's rewarding to see the positive impact we're making. Since August, we've increased the number of children receiving financial assistance through the RiteCare program. Many of these children will transition back to their insurance coverage in January, though we anticipate new applications as families navigate commercial insurance deductibles in the new year.

Below is a heartfelt note from the parent of one of the children currently benefiting from a RiteCare grant:

"Scottish Rite has made it possible for my son to receive his much needed speech therapy! When he began, he was non-talking and making a lot of frustrated screams and animal noises. After a few short months, he is noticeably saying words (even if not always understood) and making intentional efforts to communicate through words. He loves his therapist Patti and looks forward to his "Play Dates!" Without the financial support of Scottish Rite, his therapy sessions would be financially unattainable. Thanks!"

This is the same message we, as therapists, get from all the parents whose children receive assistance from the Rite Care Grant. It is truly a gift.

Hope you all had a safe and joyous Holiday Season. See you in 2025!

Submitted by Patti Anderson,
RiteCare Program Director, Montrose
Regional Health



University of Northern Colorado Quarterly Update

We are wrapping up another great Fall semester for the UNC Speech-Language Pathology Program! Fourteen of our first year graduate students participated in the Greeley Treasure Chest program and gained incredibly valuable experience with parent coaching and early intervention. Next semester, the second half of our first year graduate students will participate in the Treasure Chest program.

In early December, several of our graduate students volunteered at the SEVA Community Holiday Fiesta in Greeley. The SEVA Community is a non-profit group that partners with us and provides the off-campus space for our Treasure Chest sessions. The student organized a holiday craft and distributed materials about early language development for local families. We also recruited many new families to our Treasure Chest program!

We are so thankful for the continued support of the Scottish Rite Foundation and hope everyone has a wonderful start to the new year!



Submitted by:
Caitlin Raaz, RiteCare
Program Director, UNC



In the Spotlight at Children's Hospital Colorado

Cara Avallone, M.A., CALT

Interviewed by Lisa Powers



Lisa Powers: Tell me a little about yourself.

Cara: I started as an elementary school teacher and had always taught upper elementary and middle school (5th grade+). When my husband and I began our family, I stayed home for 13 years. I then went back to teaching and ended up in a long-term sub position with 1st grade. The teacher decided she wasn't coming back, and I stayed on as the 1st grade teacher. A little girl in the class would come to work with me while I taught guided reading. She would regularly fall asleep and seem so uninterested. During a parent night at the school open house, her father approached me and informed me she had dyslexia and wanted to know why I wasn't teaching her to read. At the time, I didn't know anything about dyslexia. Very quickly, processes and training were put into place to support me and the child in teaching her. Broad dyslexia screenings in this district didn't occur until 3rd grade. This spurred me into wanting to learn how to better teach reading to children.

In 2006-2007, we moved to Colorado, and I had the opportunity to pursue a Master's degree through a Dyslexia Specialist program at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, CO. I spent 2 years completing this dyslexia training program that incorporated hands-on practice with students. This culminated in a certification as a Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT). I then took a job as a literacy specialist with Englewood school district and worked there for 2 ½ years before joining Children's Colorado.

Lisa Powers: What brought you to Children's Hospital Colorado to work as a learning therapist?

Cara: I had a friend who worked at Children's Colorado as a learning therapist and discovered CHCO supported reading instruction for children with dyslexia. Within the schools, while it is great to provide a service, the time is so limited, and this affects the impact you have.

I was drawn to CHCO's program because you have a greater amount of time with kids, and Children's Colorado has Scottish Rite scholarship support, which allows families access to services. I felt some students at the school really needed one-on-one support but didn't have that option. At Children's, we can tailor our approach to the needs of the individual child – whether that be a small group or one-on-one instruction. This has kept me at CHCO now for nearly 9 years.

Lisa: If my child was to have you as a therapist, what could I expect?

Cara: The programming for dyslexia is very hands-on, multisensory. Families can expect their children to be very engaged in active learning – lots of discussion, questioning, comparing sounds and letters. Engaged discussions lead a child to understand all that is involved in sound production and the mapping of those sounds to the symbols of our language (alphabet). I work to help kids understand the sequence of the alphabet, the shape and structure of letters, print form versus cursive form, decoding, encoding, morphology, comprehension, and many more aspects. What I hear a lot from parents when they are observing is, "I never knew that."

Additionally, families will feel supported in being able to observe and learn the approach. When they go home to work on homework, they know the lingo and strategies to best support their children. I hope to serve as a support to parents in terms of what having a child with dyslexia means and work with teachers in the school to bridge that gap and be a resource to them as well.

Lisa: What is something funny that has occurred during therapy?

Cara: Recently, a patient was practicing writing a cursive letter h. This patient struggles with pencil grip, directionality, letter formation, etc., so learning cursive is a big achievement. After tracing a few copies, he made one on his own. He looked at the finished product and announced, "Hey, not bad! That looks VERY itchy!"

Lisa: What do you most enjoy about your work?

Cara: I enjoy the families and the "aha" moments when students realize something about a word or word structure that clicks. Once they get the bug of seeing how something can be new and make sense to them, their confidence builds, and they become more invested; they are motivated to make progress. Initially, the instruction can seem so basic but after about 2 weeks, it takes off – kids need a solid foundation. I enjoy hearing kids and families share moments they experience together.

(Continued on next page)

In the spotlight continued

Lisa: How has the Scottish Rite Foundation (SRF) impacted the care you provide?

Cara: We couldn't do what we do without them. We can't reach the children who need it most without their support. It's one thing to know you are helping a child whose family has means, but it is so rewarding to help all kids and not have cost be a barrier to their language learning. This financial support is a huge reason why I love working here!

Lisa Powers: What would you like the SRF Masons to know?

Cara: How thankful I am, and our families are, for their support. Our families sometimes get teary, especially at the end of therapy, reflecting on where they've started and how far their child has come. It is only with the support of the SRF Masons that their child is on a different trajectory. Sometimes, parents have little to no hope for their kids when they start therapy but now can see big dreams for their kids.

**Submitted by: Lisa Powers, Associate Clinical Manager
Children's Hospital Colorado**

Children's Hospital Colorado 2024 Fall First Steps Camp

Another wonderful Fall First Steps camp is in the books! Six families gathered at Easterseals Rocky Mountain Village on a warm fall weekend full of gorgeous fall colors. While parents worked with our AAC team to improve their AAC skills, campers went on hayrides, visited a pumpkin patch, and went fishing. Between activities, families had the opportunity to practice their skills with their children and receive hands on instruction to better support their child's communication. Families also had the opportunity to work one on one with a device specialist to further understand and customize their child's devices. One parent shared the following about their experience saying, *"Everything was just a tremendous gift! Thank you thank you thank you. The activities were so hard in the beginning and then I was able to really see the impact of all I learned."*

First Steps Camp is not possible without the generous funding from the Scottish Rite Foundation. The majority of our families receive scholarships from the SRF which is the only way they are able to attend camp. Thank you SRF for supporting our AAC families!



Submitted by: Makenzie Hull, Administrative Services Coordinator, Children's Hospital Colorado

St. Mary's Hospital RiteCare Speech & Language Program **Family's Express Their Appreciation**

As this year ends, I am reminded of the many blessings I have been afforded over the years. One of the best opportunities of my career is to be associated with the Scottish Rite Program and make this program available to this community. Knowing I was not the only person who has been grateful for this program, I decided to ask the parents of the children who have received therapy this past year with the assistance of the Scottish Rite Foundation. Here are their responses to the Question: "How has the Scottish Rite Program benefitted your child and family?"

"All three of my children have attended St. Mary's Life Center with the assistance of the Scottish Rite. All the years of support, love, growth, and friendship. What can I say? How Can I thank you? My children are my heart, my soul, and my reason for living. You helped the world see them, understand them, and accept them. God Bless You. From the bottom of my heart."

"My son is more engaged in conversation with family and friends. He is more outgoing overall and joyful, to be understood. Scottish Rite has been a great blessing, with taking the financial burden each visit"

"Our daughter has shown marked improvement in her speech and social confidence in just a few short months in speech therapy. She looks forward to her group lesson every week, and the therapists are always kind and excellent at what they do. Financial assistance from Scottish Rite has simplified the process for our family and allowed us to receive these services without stressing about the costs. We are grateful programs like this exist in our area and are not prohibitively expensive. Thank you, Scottish Rite!"

"I have had two of my children in the Scottish Rite Speech Program. I'm so thankful for my kids to receive therapy that if not for Scottish Rite we wouldn't be able to afford. The tools this program has provided my children and myself to help children succeed is invaluable."

"This program has given us the ability to begin conversing with our child which means the world to our family. Our son has come so far, we cannot wait to see what else is in store"

"Scottish Rite has helped two of my children be able to express themselves and others to be able to understand them. Having to see any child become frustrated because they are not able to make their needs known is heart breaking, let alone your own. The process has been slow but would be impossible without Scottish Rite. We are thankful for this program every day! Even years later with my son who graduated from speech 3 years ago!" We all want to say THANK YOU!

Submitted by: Amy Brophy-Neilsen, RiteCare Program Director St. Mary's Hospital Grand Junction

Additional Thanks from Children's Hospital Colorado Family

Thank you Scottish Rite Foundation,

"Without your support, we wouldn't be able to have speech every week without worrying about how to pay for it. Thanks to you, my daughter has been able to attend group therapy and speech therapy. Now, I'm actually able to communicate with my daughter and she can share her ideas with me and our extended family. She can share her world with others, and the difference is amazing. Thank you, Scottish Rite donors! "

A thankful family



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