

# Fall 2016 — ALTA bul\*le\*tin

## The Newsletter of the Academic Language Therapy Association

### Texas Legislative Update

Courtney Read Hoffman

For those who are new members to ALTA, I wanted to share with you the history and background for the licensure of Dyslexia Therapists and Practitioners.

In 2005, ALTA leadership supported a bill in the Texas Legislature that established licensure for Dyslexia Therapists and Practitioners. It took three sessions to pass that legislation. The purpose of the bill was to keep your profession elevated with qualified, trained individuals just like other therapy professions. The goal was to protect the public and those who had invested time and money to become highly trained to treat children and adults with dyslexia.

The law, as written, was based on ALTA's certification and continuing education requirements. There are two levels of the license: Licensed Dyslexia Therapist, the equivalent of a CALT with a Master's degree and Licensed Dyslexia Practitioners, the equivalent of a CALP. During the first year of this voluntary license, anyone who did not have a Master's degree and was already a CALT had the opportunity to get the therapist license without the Master's degree. After that year, everyone was expected to have a Master's degree to be called a Licensed Dyslexia Therapist, the level of education expected in the health-related professions for a person practicing outside of a supervised setting.

The license was housed at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) but on October 3, 2016 moved to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR). There an Advisory Board was established to guide the agency on any issues about dyslexia related to the license.

Other health-related professions at TDLR include: Athletic Trainers, Dietitians, Hearing Instrument Fitters and Dispensers, Midwives, Orthotists and Prosthetists and Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists.

TDLR allows for license applications, renewals and changes of address to be done online. Visit the website to better acquaint yourself with the [Licensed Dyslexia Therapist and Practitioner webpage](#). You can also sign up for email updates to receive notices about rules, laws, fees, meetings and more on the TDLR website.

The 85th Texas legislative session begins on the second Tuesday in January and lasts for 140 days until May 29. Once the November 8 General Election has occurred, the Capitol will begin to buzz with newly elected legislators. Get to know who represents you and let them know the good work you do in the realm of dyslexia. To find out who represents you, [go to this website](#), or Google [Who Represents Me?](#)

Mark your calendars to attend Dyslexia Awareness Day at the Capitol on Wednesday, February 8 to visit the offices of those who represent you!

## Texas Dyslexia Identification Academy

**Cara Wyly, M. Ed**

Texas is ahead of the game when it comes to identifying and providing intervention for students with dyslexia. A dyslexia law has been in place since 1986 which requires public schools to test for dyslexia and provide treatment for any student determined to have dyslexia or related disorders. Guidance to assist in the implementation of the law has been in place since 1987 with the most recent revision being in 2014 (The Texas Dyslexia Handbook; Procedures Concerning Dyslexia and Related Disorders Revised 2014).

As with most written documents, the language used can leave room for personal interpretation. The Texas Dyslexia Handbook is no exception. The Texas Dyslexia Identification Academy (TDIA) was developed to support public schools with the challenges of identifying students with dyslexia in a way that is consistent with the intent of the law and guidance from the Texas Education Agency.

The TDIA includes five modules addressing different aspects of the dyslexia assessment process in Texas:

Module 1 — Foundations

Module 2 — Evaluation

Module 3 — Considerations for ELLs

Module 4 — Interpreting Scores

Module 5 — Report Writing and Case Studies

Educators are encouraged to attend the modules that best fit their needs. Module 1 is appropriate for all educators and could satisfy TAC §232.11 which requires educators who teach students with dyslexia to have CPE training in new research and practices in educating students with dyslexia.

For more information about the TDIA, contact your Regional Education Service Center or the Texas Dyslexia Helpline at 1-800-232-3030.

## **Michelle Carter Makes History In 2016**

**Gay Darden**

**Michelle Carter** makes history for winning the **Gold Medal** in shot put at the Rio Olympics. With her personal best, Michelle gave the US its first gold medal ever in shot put, and she is also the first black woman to ever win a medal in shot put at the Olympics. On social media she has become a star: @ShotDiva.



Michelle is not your stereo type female shot putter. She brings glamour to the sport, being a beautiful and feminine young woman wearing lip gloss, fake eyelashes, make-up, manicured nails, styled hair, earrings, and

bracelets. She believes that if you look good, you feel good about yourself and then you will do good, and she sure did.

A graduate of Red Oak High School and the University of Texas in Austin, she has won other medals in her sport during these years.

Life has not always been easy for Michelle; she is dyslexic. After struggling in school, she spent 4th and 5th grades in daily instruction in the MTA program for remediation. Her self-acceptance has helped to make her self-confident.



Today, Michelle is a Certified Professional Makeup Artist with her own Shot Diva Make up Line. In 2013, she started YOU THROW GIRL a sports confidence camp for girls. Michelle "Shot Diva" Carter is a role model and an inspiration for others. Add her name to the list of famous and successful dyslexics. She is another example of the talents that our dyslexic students have. CONGRATULATIONS!

## **ALTA's Virginia Chapter: Our Brief History!**

**Susan Louchen**



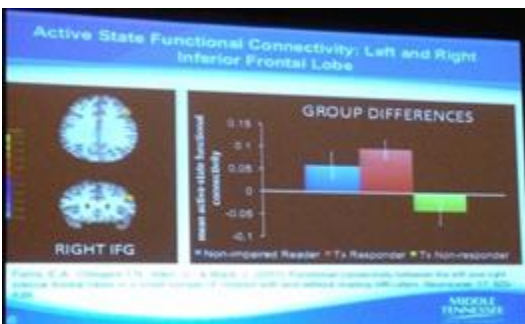
ALTA's Virginia Chapter started in the Spring of 2016. In February, CALTs and CALT-track interns met informally in Springfield to share questions, experiences, tips, and an interest in representing Academic Language Therapy in the community at the local and state level.



In March we met in Great Falls. At that time, it was agreed to formally apply to ALTA for Chapter status, and officers were elected. We then spent two hours taking turns presenting favorite therapy practices, tips, and resources. Attending this initial formal meeting (including three via Skype!) were: CALTs Kathy Jackson, Susan Louchen ([Key To Reading & Writing LLC](#)), Donna Brooks (private practice), Christina Seabold Fox ([Dyslexia Intervention Services](#)), Leda Spencer & Jeanne Greer of [Richmond Reading Resources](#), and Maurie Yarber ([Riverside School](#)). Also participating were seven interns (including host Jennifer Appleton, who has since earned CALT designation), as well as Academic Therapists Susan Tinkham and Carol Kinkoph, both of which have since become CALTs in private practice. While collectively we represent a broad range of backgrounds prior to passing the Alliance exam, many have been trained in delivering the therapy level *Sounds In Syllables*, designed by Sandra Dillon, QI.



In April, Carla Goins, CALT, (left) and Virginia Chapter President Susan Louchen, CALT (right) had the opportunity to meet ALTA President Janna Curry-Dobbs M.Ed., L.D.T., C.A.L.T., QI (center) at the 2016 Annual ALTA conference in Richardson TX.



The conference was a dynamic gathering, with opportunities for everyone to be involved. Presentations included an in-depth, rich and engaging historical overview of our profession, and detailed presentations documenting the empirical results of multisensory structured language therapy.



In May, those from both central and northern Virginia were able to meet in person for the first time at a VBIDA conference in Milford VA. It was an opportunity to provide outreach to the community and other professionals, as well as participate in continuing education.

Four of our ALTA Virginia Chapter are among the first to have joined ALTA as Trainee Affiliate level members: Liz Gordon, M.Ed. ([Smart Cookie Reading](#)), Maura Locke (Locked on Learning), Cathy Ruse, J.D., and Christine Chambers (Reston Readers). All are in CALT-track training through the IMSLEC accredited ASDEC/Atlantic Seaboard Dyslexia Education Center of Rockville, Maryland. CALTs Donna Brooks, and Deborah Spear ([Virginia Dyslexia Therapy](#)), provide training and supervision to these and other Trainee Affiliate level student therapists.



ALTA Virginia Chapter has two online public outreach platforms:

- our website, [www.altavc.weebly.com](http://www.altavc.weebly.com), and
- our Facebook page — [Academic Language Therapy Association - Virginia Chapter](#).

In addition, a closed Facebook group provides an informal professional forum for Virginia ALTA members and CALT-track interns to share ideas and questions, post events, etc.

Looking forward, our Chapter is currently planning:

- a Fall general Chapter meeting,
- a Chapter legislative committee that will be representing our profession at the state level,
- to have a representative attend the ALTA board meeting during the IDA conference in October.

Several Virginia Chapter members also plan to attend the 2017 ALTA Annual Conference in Richardson, Texas.

We are pleased to have joined the other ALTA Chapters, and be able to represent our profession in a pro-active way!



Name	Position	Term
Susan Louchen, CALT	President	2016-2018
Christina Seabold Fox, CALT	President-Elect	2016-2018
Jeanne Greer, CALT	Vice-President	2016-2018
Kathy Jackson, CALT	Treasurer	2016-2018

## MS ALTA Chapter Fall News

**Mary Lou Johnson**

ALTA members across the state are providing a multitude of events to promote dyslexia awareness and opportunities for ALTA members to earn valuable CEUs. The University of Southern, Dubard Center recently held their 20th Annual Dubard Symposium — Dyslexia and Related Disorders, September 14-15th. Mississippi College Dyslexia Center will host its annual Fall Dyslexia Conference, October 3rd, with a lunch meeting for ALTA members. William Carey College Dyslexia Therapy Program will offer a free awareness event open to the public on October 17th, titled *Dyslexia Facts and Fiction*. MS Dyslexia Centers of MS will sponsor an awareness event October 7th and annual conference on January 13, 2017. The MS ALTA Regional Chapter will host their annual conference and ALTA lunch meeting on February 9, 2017.

## ALTA's 30th Anniversary (1986 - 2016)

Enjoy this photo album from ALTA's 30th Anniversary celebration. You may click on any of the images to download a high-resolution version of the photo.



25 Year Member Awardees



30 Year Member Awardees



2016 ALTA Board of Directors



2016-2018 ALTA Board of Directors



Janna Curry, Margaret Smith, Edith Hogan, Marilyn Mathis



Judith Birsh, Marilyn Mathis, Marcia Henry, Tammy Deicken (dressed up as Anna Gillingham)





Kay Peterson, Melanie Royal, Marilyn Mathis — Ayelette Cox Award



Janna Curry, Nancy Cushen-White, Marilyn Mathis — Luke Waites Award



Lisa Jones, Cindy Brown, Marilyn Mathis, Brenda Wise, and Charlotte Granito from Pennsylvania



Lynne Fitzhugh, Judith Birsh, and the Colorado Team



Madeleine Crouch



Chris Bedenbaugh



Margaret Smith



Marilyn Mathis gives Madeleine Crouch the Jamie G. Williams ALTA Founders Award



Tinicy Miller



Tammy Deicken and Marcia Henry