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NORA

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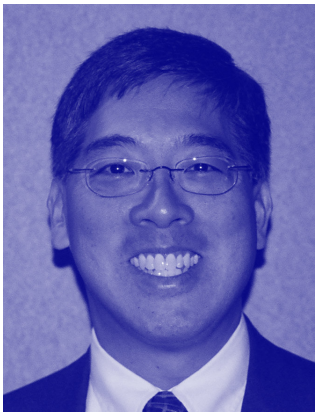
Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Association, International

In This Issue

President's Message



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Recently, I had the opportunity to relax at home and watch the National Spelling Bee competition with my 7 year old daughter Jennifer. I know, really exciting. But actually, it was. We both enjoyed seeing how students, ages 12 to 17 perform under pressure and use specific questions to help each one figure out the correct spelling of words that are far beyond my usual vocabulary. Jennifer commented that "Jeffrey wouldn't do that" and asked if I could figure out how to spell using the answers to the questions.

In our experiences in rehabilitation, we are often called to perform under pressure, frequently trying our best to explain what is happening to the patient and why. It is even more interesting when we must testify in a deposition. However, just as these students tried to use whatever information they could gather to figure out the spelling of a word, as clinicians/diagnosticians, we must ask specific questions that help us determine not only the conditions that are interfering with the patient's rehabilitation, but to recommend appropriate and necessary treatment to improve the functional outcome of that patient.

In my two years as your president, the awareness of neuro-optometry has continued to grow. More of our optometric colleagues are entering into affiliations or staff positions with rehabilitation hospitals or facilities. The American Optometric Association has formed a committee in an effort to increase the awareness of Neuro-Optometry. The Veteran's Administration has recognized an immediate need to identify and treat soldiers who have experienced traumatic brain injury.

From the beginning of my term, NORA had the challenge of im-

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

NORA Noteworthy

NORA Noteworthy gives you a quick look at current news within the organization.

15th Annual NORA Multidisciplinary Conference.
The 15th Annual Multidisciplinary Conference is fast approaching. As a NORA member you should have already received your registration forms by mail. This year's conference will be held at the Omni Tucson National Golf Resort and Spa in Tucson Arizona March 23-26 2006. March is high season for Tucson so be sure to make your reservation soon. For more information visit our website at nora.cc.

Proposed Slate of Officers.
As chairman of the nominating committee for the incoming NORA board, Vince Vicci, O.D. has proposed the following slate of officers to be considered by the NORA general membership.

Executive Board:
President: Don Fong, O.D.
Vice President: Diana Ludlam, COVT
Secretary: Janet Berthiaume, OTR
Treasurer: Carolyn Carman-Merrifield, O.D.
Executive Director: Mr. Robert Williams
Immediate Past President: Eric Ikeda, O.D.

Advisory Council:
Susan Wenberg, MA, DC, Chris Nelms, OTR, Kevin Chauvette, O.D., and Susan Durham, O.D. .

Past Presidents Council:
William V. Padula, O.D., Vincent R. Vicci Jr., O.D., Thomas Politzer, O.D., John A. Thomas, O.D., Brenda Heinke Montecalvo, O.D., and Eric Ikeda, O.D. (Chairman).

Nominations for Awards
Nominations are now being considered for the following:

Advancement of Science Award (presented to the individual, group, agency or organization that has provided a unique and valued contribution to the science of neuro-optometric rehabilitation and possibly including but not be limited to clinical investigation, scientific discovery, public awareness, publication, or research.).

Advancement of Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation Award (presented to the individual, group, agency, or organization that has demonstrated, by virtue of their actions, treatments, or clinical procedures, to further the advancement of the art and science of neuro-optometric rehabilitation. The advancement of neuro-optometric rehabilitation is expected to increase public awareness, to enhance function, performance and rehabilitation outcomes.).

William M. Ludlam, O.D. and Diana P. Ludlam, B.S., C.O.V.T., Educators Award (presented to the individual educator or institution best exemplifying the commitment to serving the students and patients in the neuro-optometric rehabilitation effort).

If you know of someone who should be considered please contact Dr. Danny Gottlieb with the appropriate information for nomination as soon as possible at (404) 296-6000 or 5462 Memorial Dr. Ste. 101; Stone Mountain, GA 30083.

NORA Curriculum Program.
If you have questions about the curriculum program, please contact Chris Nelms,OTR at a.c.nelms@usa.net. Registration forms to start the curriculum process and Level I examinations are available by contacting the NORA toll free number at (866) 2CBETTR.

Need Networking Information?
NORA continues to provide brochures and information packets to assist members in networking with other members of the rehabilitation community. Brochures and packets are available in limited quantities at no charge to members. Materials can be obtained by calling NORA, toll free, at (866) 2CBETTR.

NORA Website. The NORA website continues to be updated. Please visit the website at NORA.cc.

In Memory
Funeral services for Marjie Thompson, COVT, were held Thursday, December 8, 2005 in Chula Vista, California. Although Ms. Thompson's primary focus was on developmental vision care and educating the public accordingly, her work has impacted, and will continue to impact, all aspects of the field of vision therapy and vision rehabilitation. Along with PAVE's work in developmental vision they have also coordinated with NORA as a source for rehabilitation referrals. Marjie will be greatly missed.

COVD recently released the following news brief concerning her passing: *It is with deep sadness that we announce the death of Ms. Marjie Thompson, Certified Optometric Vision Therapist and founder and president of Parent's Active for Vision Education (P.A.V.E.).*

Marjie was a true crusader for developmental vision care and her efforts to help ensure children had the visual skills needed to achieve in school and in life helped countless children. Recently COVD gave her the first COVD Lifetime Achievement Award for her many efforts to increase public awareness of developmental optometry. The award was presented to her at her home in San Diego. Among those present was Dr. Robert Sanet, who spoke the following as part of his remarks to Marjie at the ceremony:

"I so admire your commitment to others. I don't believe that I have ever known anyone filled with less prejudice and more love. I don't believe that I have ever known a person who is more selfless and committed to the

welfare of children. There is no possible way that I could have helped as many children and adults reach their full potential if it were not for your dedication, input, guidance and unwavering support . . ."

"As much as you did for me and my practice, your true gift to the world has been PAVE. The countless hours you have dedicated, the personal funds you have donated, the people you have inspired and attracted to your noble cause are testaments to who you are as a person. PAVE, your gift to the world, is your legacy. PAVE, the "child" that you, nurtured, loved and then gave to the world will ultimately help hundreds of thousands and possibly even millions of children lead more fulfilling and happier lives."

Condolences may be sent to the Thompson family resident, 7331 Hamlet Ave., San Diego, CA 92120.

Contributions to PAVE and their neuro-optometric rehabilitation efforts, in memory of Marjie Thompson, can be sent to: PAVE, Dan Mc Kinley, Executive Director, 1841 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Dr., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212. For more information concerning PAVE visit their website at PAVE.org.

Members On The Move

Several NORA members contributed excellent articles on neuro-optometry in a recent special issue of Brain Injury Professional journal, volume 2, 2005. These doctors included, ***Allen Cohen, O.D., Robert Fox, O.D., Carl Hillier, O.D., Neil Margolis, O.D., and Penelope Suter, O.D.*** For reprint requests, please contact, Managing Editor, Brain Injury Professional, P.O. Box 131401, Houston, TX 77219-1400, Phone (713)526-6900, Fax (713)526-7787, or mail@hdipub.com.

Daniel Gottlieb, O.D., was recently inducted into the National Academies of Practice (NAP) at the organization's annual banquet in Arlington VA. The national Academies of Practice is an interdisciplinary professional organization composed of leaders in the health care field from varied disciplines.

In January ***Robert Sanet, O.D.,*** presented seminars in Brescia, Italy, as well as, Madrid, Spain, on Piaget Theory, The Optometric Evaluation of Infants, Evaluation and Therapy Techniques for Retained Primitive Reflexes and Optometric Evaluation of Preschool Children. In February he will travel to Cuernavaca to present a seminar on The Evaluation, Management and Treatment of Visual Problems Secondary to Traumatic Brain Injury. In April, he will travel to Australia to present the Kraskin Memorial Lecture at the ICBO meeting in Sydney.

Other Meetings

The American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc. (AOTA): Will be holding their annual conference & expo April 27-30, in Charlotte, NC. For more information visit their website at AOTA.org.

The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED): The 2006 ADED Conference will be held in Lexington, KY, August 5-8. For more information visit their website at aded.net.

The College of Syntonic Optometry: The College of Syntonic Optometry will hold their 74th Annual Conference on Light and Vision May 4-7, 2006 at the Sirata Beach Resort, St. Pete Beach, FL. For more information visit their website at syntonicphototherapy.com.

The International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals (IARP): Will hold their Annual Conference May 19-21, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. For more information visit their website at www.rehabpro.org.

The Ohio State University, College of Optometry: Will present the "Binocular Vision and Pediatrics Forum and the Children's Learning Forum" April 6-7, Columbus, OH. Speakers: Drs. Michael Earley and Penelope Suter. Topic: neuroanatomical models of vision and their clinical application in vision rehabilitation. Contact: Dr. Marjean Kulp (614) 688-3336 or visit the website at http://optometry.osu.edu.

Optometric Extension Program:
OEP has numerous meetings. Just a few are listed here. To see their complete calendar, visit their web site at oep.org.

April 1-2, TBI/ABI will be held in Baltimore, MD. Topic: The Diagnosis, Management and Treatment of Brain Injury Patients. Instructor: Paul A. Harris, O.D.. Contact: Theresa Krejci, 800-447-0370 or visit www.babousa.org.

April 7-11, The Art & Science of Optometric Care—A Behavioral Perspective will be held in Fort Lauderdale, FL. Hands-on behavioral optometric clinical training in evaluation, alternatives presentations and prescribing. Instructor: Bob Hohendorf, O.D.. Contact: Theresa Krejci, 800-447-0370 or visit www.babousa.org.

April 26-30, The Behavioral Scholar in Residence will be held in Boston, MA. Topic: Traumatic Brain Injury/Acquired Brain Injury. Speaker: Irwin Suchoff, O.D. Contact: Ernest Lowenstein, O.D. 617-244-6454.

April 21-24, Sydney, Australia, is the host city for the 5th International Congress of Behavioral Optometry. It will be a four day conference on topics including world optometry, infants vision and vision development, a myopia forum, optometric neurology and multi modal therapies. For further information, please visit the Congress website www.icbo2006.com.

April 30 - May 1, Eastern States Congress. Topic: Neuro Optometry/ Optometric Vision Rehabilitation. Speakers: Michael Earley, O.D., Ph.D., Neera Kapoor, O.D., and Robert Fox, O.D. Contact Stuart Rothman, O.D., SMROD@aol.com.

Neuro-Optometric Pearl

Visual Space - Is Visual Localization Related to Proprioceptive Localization ?

Curtis R. Baxstrom, MA, OD, FCOVD, FNORA

A common visual sequelae of an acquired brain trauma or stroke is diplopia. The patient's world has become unstable and their ability to accurately localize in space and perceive single has diminished. Is this simply due to an ocular motor issue or is it related to the integration of the visual, motor, and vestibular space world of the individual?

The testing for diplopia can be performed with a variety of different tests. One may use a Wolff wand or even a Worth 4 Dot test. If the patient observes diplopia or 2, 3, or 5 dots on the Worth test you may want to probe further than simply recording your patients verbal response. I like to ask the patient to touch the target and report what they observe. Very commonly the diplopia disappears and the response on the Worth is changed to 4 dots.

Introducing the hand into the task adds proprioceptive localization to the visual task. Why might one perceive differently under this condition? If there are cognitive issues the patient may not respond with the knowledge of numerosity and thus doesn't see the "set" of 4 dots. There may also be a visual field deficit and thus they may perceive only 3 of the actual 4 dots. Having your patient touch and count may help you rule out some of these possibilities. But more often than not, my experience has been that visual localization improves when one adds proprioceptive localization to the visual process. On the Brock string the patient may now appreciate single and the Worth is reported as 4 dots. Both of these responses can indicate a more appropriate visual localization of the target.

These responses can also lead us to the implementation of treatment strategies to help the patient to learn to localize from near to far. Initially the patient may be limited to single vision only within their arms length. We next ask the question, "can they extend this outward"? Often we add a wood dowel or Brock string to move from near space to a more distant target of regard. I often have patients that report constant diplopia while watching TV. When they use a Brock string attached to the TV, they often report single vision with both strings being observed (i.e. no suppression). This observation is also supported in the neuroscience literature in experiments with reaching where one can extend their ability to do so while using "rakes".

Trying to understand why a patient can see single or observe 4 dots with the simple addition of proprioceptive localization can be challenging. I'd suggest that there are a number of reasons why single vision and appropriate visual localization is supported when one adds proprioception localization. In some cases a single reason may be the key factor, but in other cases a combination of reasons could support the improved performance. Some possible reasons include :

- When a hand is involved it has been shown that more attention is directed toward the task. Increasing attention likely improves task performance.
- When the hand is added, the target may be considered to be larger than the target itself (target plus hand). Thus the larger the area of localization, the easier it is to fuse.
- Proprioception can provide solid object localization whereas if one relies simply on visual cues, they may not be as accurate. The two together should be considered complimentary and supportive in function. The long term goal is to become visually independent without the need for proprioceptive localization.
- Developmentally it is often suggested that the near world of the infant is developed before they learn to localize further away. Likewise, the brain injured or stroke patient may fall back to this lower level of development as a foundation from which to rebuild from.

Overall, the observations of changes in visual localization secondary to proprioceptive input can provide you with insights into how you may help develop an appropriate treatment protocol for patients with diplopia.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

proving our administration and communication. We are in our second year of having centralized operations and working with our administrator, Mr. Bob Williams. The website is operational beyond what we had experienced in the past. The curriculum program continues to strive to provide current information and improve on helping our members reach and maintain a high level of expertise.

Throughout these past two years, I have had the pleasure to work with Dr. Don Fong. We have maintained constant communication on all issues that involve NORA. More importantly, he has provided me with support and encouragement and I certainly look forward to his leadership.

Finally, I thank each of you for your support of NORA. This is your organization. I look forward to seeing each of you at the annual conference in Tucson.

With gratitude,

Eric