



# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION

A Nonprofit Organization

SUMMER 2023

Since 1947... Helping Those Who Stutter

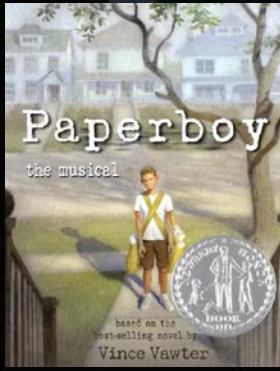


## PAPERBOY

TAKES THE STAGE



# PAPERBOY SINGS ON CENTER STAGE



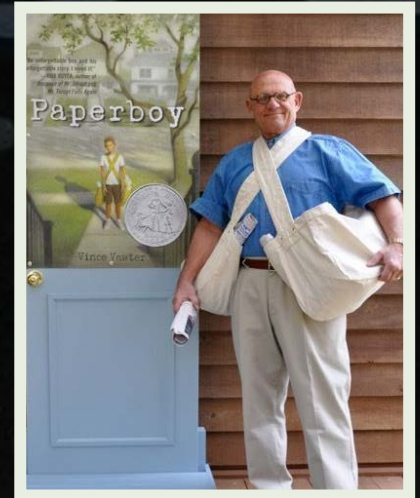
We first met Vince Vawter in the Spring of 2014 at our National Stuttering Awareness Week (NSAW) gala at the Lotos Club in New York City. Vince was among several notable authors, who, as Stuttering Foundation

President Jane Fraser put it, had “the courage to share their stories and inspire others hold a special place in the hearts of the millions of people worldwide who struggle to speak.”

Vince is the author of the 2014 Newbery Honor Book *Paperboy*, and a native of Memphis, Tennessee. He worked in newspapers for 40 years, rising from sportswriter to newspaper publisher. Vince retired in 2006 to devote full time to the book he always knew he would write, the story of a boy who battled a debilitating stutter while growing up in a racially segregated Memphis in the 1950s. In addition to the Newbery Honor, *Paperboy* is a selection of the Junior Library Guild and was named a Top Ten Book of Historical Fiction for Youth by the American Library Association.

Most recently, Vince’s beloved *Paperboy* was adapted for the stage, in the form of a musical, by the Manhattan School of Music (MSM).

The production of the musical *Paperboy* premiered at Manhattan School of Music March 24-26, 2023. The novel it’s based on of the same title has been translated into 17 languages — and this 18th translation into the language of musical theatre may be its most universal. Set in 1950s Memphis, *Paperboy* tells the true story of an 11-year-old boy who stutters and how his life is transformed one summer when he takes over a friend’s paper route.



*Vince Vawter, a native of Memphis, retired after a 40-year career in newspapers, most recently as the president and publisher of the Evansville (Ind.) Courier & Press. His debut novel, Paperboy, received a Newberry Honor award in 2014. The story is based on his real-life experience growing up in the 1950s as a person who stutters. Vince spends his retirement traveling the country and discussing his books with schools, reading and education groups, as well as stuttering advocacy organizations. He and his wife, Betty, live in Louisville, Tenn., on a small farm in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains near Knoxville.*





Over the past two years, *Paperboy* has had three developmental workshops in the MSM Musical Theatre Lab Series which was created to offer students the opportunity to work on musicals-in-development and give musical theatre artists a no-pressure environment where they can develop new work. The Lab Series allowed producers to hear the script and the score and make revisions.

According to the creative team behind the production, the story of *Paperboy* called out to be realized as a musical. “The main character in *Paperboy* struggles with stuttering, however the overall theme of the production is about communication,” said Director Don Stephenson. “Humans have struggled to communicate with each other ever since the beginning of time. It is the universal pursuit. The show asks the questions: How do we talk to each other? What other ways can we talk if not with our voices? What alternate ways can we reach out our hands to each other? How can we understand each other using different methods of communication? We all go through our days talking or texting or emailing; we are all trying to be understood and communicate our wants, desires, and deepest selves.”

“We received feedback from more than a few audience members who stutter...they were visibly moved and thanked us for telling this story.”



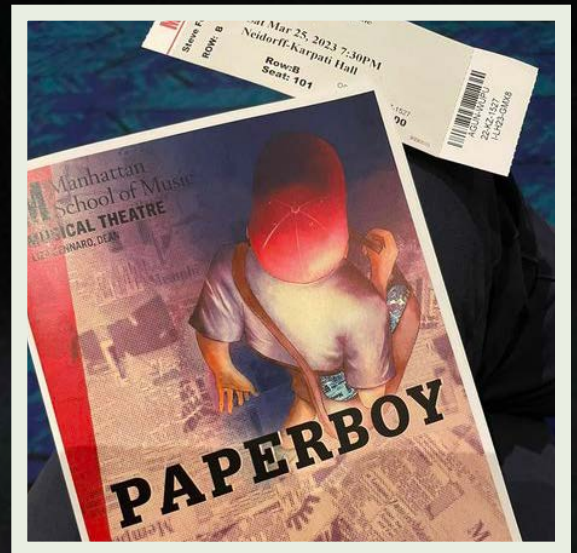


“We received feedback from more than a few audience members who stutter,” said Co-writer and licensed and practicing speech-language pathologist and speech teacher in New York City Schools Emily Loesser. “They were visibly moved and thanked us for telling this story. Just as Vince's book has meant so much to so many, we are hoping that this new iteration will as well. We hope that people from the stuttering community will feel seen, heard, represented, and understood. We hope that SLPs will understand that self-acceptance is an important part of therapy.”

“I will share my stuttering journey as long as I am able but am also adamant that we are so much more than our speech impediments.”

For Emily, her work on *Paperboy* clearly impacted her work as an SLP. “Treatment for stuttering has undergone a dramatic shift in the last ten years,” she said. “My conversations with Vince as we worked on the play has underscored this evolution. As Vince told me so simply, ‘Stuttering happens when we are trying not to stutter.’ As a therapist to speak of a ‘cure’ or to talk about ‘eliminating’ stuttering isn't helpful. Rather the focus in therapy should be on maintenance/management and helping the client find self-acceptance. This means talking about stuttering openly, addressing client's feelings about their speech, and helping the client find their unique voice. That's what the show is about.”

Seeing his work come to life on stage was a revealing experience for Vince. “Although I'm a novice to musical theater, I could quickly tell that the stage could tell certain truths that would be impossible in the book,” said Vince. “I was proud the story was told so responsibly.”







Vince was an integral part of the creative team behind the production. “My take is that the cast was glad to have me and Emily Loesser in the room,” he added. “We told Kolter, the paperboy, that while we had to place some stuttered words in the script that he should feel where and when to stutter himself. I watched him over three years and he truly took this to heart. I also told him that he couldn’t go wrong on how and when to stutter because stuttering is rarely consistent and that no two stutters are alike.”

Watching the story performed on stage also gave Vince several moments of self-reflection. “Watching Kolter exhibit his frustration with his speech for two hours each performance on the stage reminded me dramatically of what I went through at that age; all the confusion and the anger. I’m not sure the amount of frustration I felt came through in the book as much as it did on stage.”

For Vince, the premiere and limited run of the musical *Paperboy* is just the beginning. “Emily, Don, Jim Wann and David Shenton are all musical

theatre professionals with Broadway experience,” he said. “They truly believe we have a viable show that should go to a commercial production. I would like to see wide distribution for the show because I think it’s a story that needs to be told.”

As for what lies ahead in the future for Vince, his goals are a bit simpler. “I will share my stuttering journey as long as I am able but am also adamant that we are so much more than our speech impediments. I have so many interests that I could not begin to mention them all. There’s also a John Deere tractor in my barn that continues to call my name. There’s no feeling that can match the peace of bumping along on an old tractor.”

Bravo Vince! Bravo Manhattan School of Music! We’ll all keep our eye on Broadway.



# Paperboy

Book by Emily Loesser and Don Stephenson with Vince Vawter

Music by Jim Wann and David Shenton

Lyrics by Jim Wann

Manhattan School of Music, photographer Steven Pisano

Based on the novel of the same name by Vince Vawter

Orchestrations by David Shenton

Additional Orchestrations by Miles Plant

Don Stephenson, Director

Liza Gennaro, Choreographer

Miles Plant, Music Director

Michael Schweikardt, Scenic Designer

Fan Zhang, Costume Designer

Shawn Kaufman, Lighting Designer

Scott Stauffer, Sound Designer

Loryn Pretorius, Wig, Hair, and Makeup Designer

Shawn Duan, Projection Designer

Stefano Brancato, Props Supervisor

Maria DiVittorio, Production Stage Manager

Shayla Gordon, Dramaturg and Racial Sensitivity Consultant

Enrique Brown, Fight Choreographer

Amanda Kate Joshi, Associate Director

Mallorie Mendoza, Associate Choreographer

Jake Cannon, Associate Music Director

Michael Ruiz-del-Vizo, Assistant Scenic Designer

Olivia Rivera, Assistant Costume Designer

Victoria Corbalis, Assistant Lighting Designer

Margaret Fortuna Yassky, Assistant Stage Manager

# TSHA 2023



Speak with a child who stutters in an unhurried way, pausing frequently.



Blogger James Hayden joined SFA's Madison White at the annual Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention in Austin, Texas, in February. The duo were able to connect with the many therapists at one of the liveliest gatherings of the year.

# Navigating the DMV: As Scary as Getting Stopped by the Police?

If you are a person who stutters, or the parent of a child who stutters, it will come as no surprise to you that stuttering can often be misunderstood.

For more than 75 years, the Stuttering Foundation has been working to break down myths and counter misinformation about stuttering—especially with people and organizations of authority, like police officers, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents and now, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) staff.



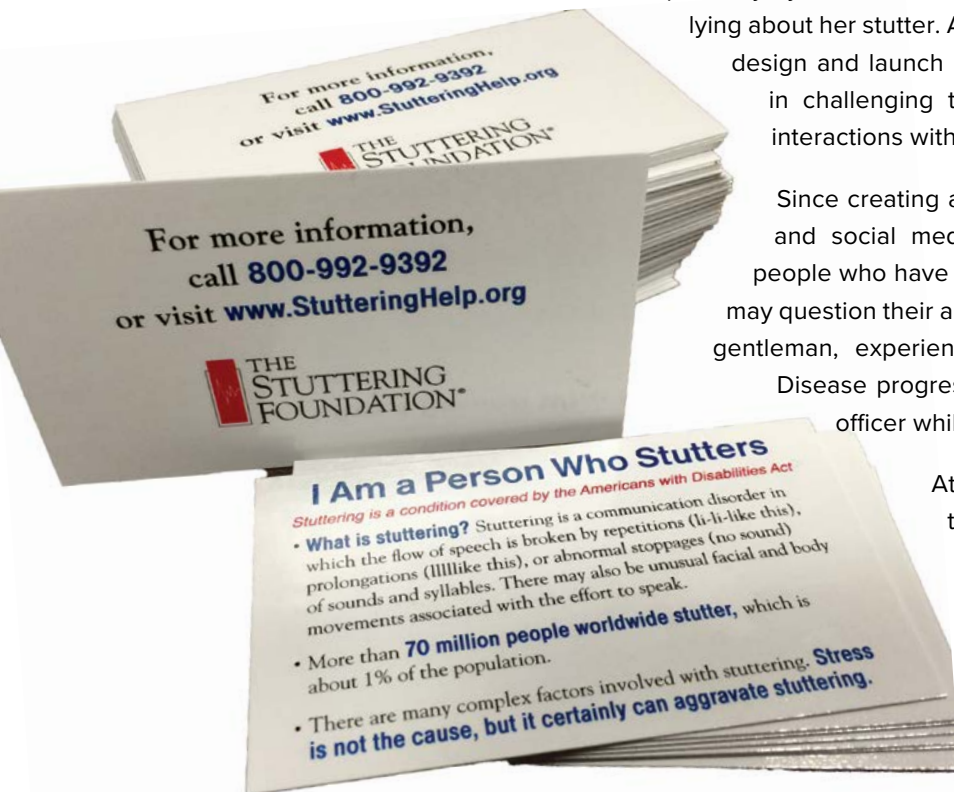
Recently, we were contacted by a woman who stutters about her experience renewing her driver's license at her state DMV. During the mandatory vision exam portion, she had a problem with her eye test. That difficulty, coupled with her stutter, led to her being flagged, and required a mental health exam to complete her license renewal. As you might imagine, she experienced a wide range of emotions during her time at the DMV, and ultimately found herself frustrated and angry. She turned to the Stuttering Foundation for help.

“When people stutter, their difficulties getting words out are sometimes misinterpreted as resulting from nervousness or even mental health conditions,” said Ellen M. Kelly, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-F, Vice President for Professional Development at the Stuttering Foundation. “This is not the case. As for any speaker, situations that are less familiar or challenging may increase the frequency of interruptions in speech, including stuttering. The challenge is with talking and is not symptomatic of a mental disorder.”

In 2016, we learned of an American citizen who stutters returning to the U.S. from overseas travel being questioned repeatedly by CBP at the airport. At one point, the traveler was accused of lying about her stutter. As a result, she helped the Stuttering Foundation design and launch its “I Stutter Card” to assist people who stutter in challenging the misunderstandings faced during everyday interactions with people who may not be familiar with stuttering.

Since creating and sharing the “I Stutter Card” on our website, and social media channels, we have heard from numerous people who have used the card to educate and inform those who may question their ability to speak fluently during an interaction. One gentleman, experiencing worsening stuttering during Parkinson's Disease progression, told of its use when stopped by a police officer while walking in his neighborhood.

At the Stuttering Foundation, we are thankful for the efficacy of the “I Stutter Card” as well as efforts people who stutter have undertaken to use it to provide accurate information about stuttering and people who stutter. Borrowing a classic tagline from American Express from few decades ago, our recommendation is “Don't leave home without it!”







## NEW GENE FINDINGS POINT TO **BRAIN CELL TYPE IN STUTTERING**

In a study recently posted in MedRXive, Dr. Dennis Drayna and colleagues report research findings that support a role for a particular brain cell type called astrocytes in stuttering. The story began more than a decade ago, when their team found evidence for the existence of a gene that caused stuttering in many members of a large Pakistani family. This gene was located on chromosome 3, but the identity of the causative gene at this location proved elusive. With continued research, a subtle mutation in a gene called *ZBTB20* was identified, and solid evidence gradually developed that this mutant gene was the cause of stuttering in this family. The gene is called *ZBTB20*. This gene encodes a so-called transcription factor, and it regulates the expression of other genes.

Dr. Drayna explained: “All the cells in our body have the same DNA. So why, for example, is a bone cell so different from a liver cell, or any of the other cell types we have? The answer lies in

which of the genes in our DNA are turned on and which are turned off. The process of turning on just the right genes required to make a particular cell type is done by transcription factors. As you might guess, transcription factors are essential for the development of the organs and particular cell types in our bodies.”

In work done by many researchers, *ZBTB20* has long been known to control the development of astrocytes, an important cell type in the brain. This was particularly interesting because, in previous work, Dr. Drayna’s group engineered mutations found in human stuttering into mice, and then showed that the mice carrying these mutations displayed alterations in their vocalization that are similar to some features of human stuttering. While these mice were apparently normal in most features, a detailed analysis of the brains of these mice showed marked deficits in astrocytes.

Dr. Drayna noted: “While this result implicating astrocytes was intriguing and suggestive, it was found





# SFA RESEARCH

## SPRING 2023



*Dr. Drayna received his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1976, and his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1981, followed by postdoctoral training at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute at the University of Utah. He joined the NIDCD in 1997, focusing on disorders of auditory pitch perception, variation in human taste perception, and disorders of voice and speech. Dr. Drayna's work has had a major focus on the genetics and neuroscience of stuttering.*

in mice. This is only an animal model, and one that has obvious limitations for understanding human speech. Our *ZBTB20* findings now provide the first connection in humans between astrocytes and stuttering.”

Mutations in *ZBTB20* appear to be a relatively uncommon cause of stuttering. While such mutations occur much more frequently in individuals who stutter compared to the general population (where they are very rare), they are found in less than 1% of individuals who stutter. With a particular cell type of interest to pursue, it is hoped that further progress can be made in understanding stuttering at a highly detailed level within the brain.



*Publication/reference: Frigerio-Domingues, C., Raza, M.H., Han, T.-U., Barnes, T., Shaw, P., Sudre, G., Riazuddin, S., Morell, R., and Drayna D. Mutations in ZBTB20 in individuals with persistent stuttering. MedRxiv 2022: <https://medrxiv.org/cgi/content/short/2022.11.03.22281471v1>*



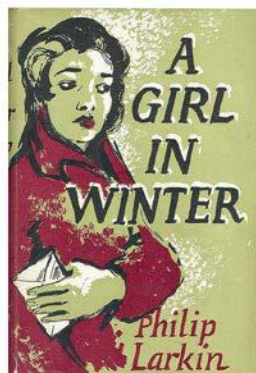
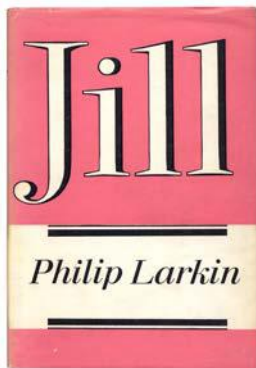


A STUTTERING FOUNDATION TRIBUTE

# PHILIP LARKIN

FAMED BRITISH POET & NOVELIST

*Philip Larkin was one of the most prolific literary figures in Great Britain during the second half of the twentieth century. He was also a person who stuttered throughout his life.*

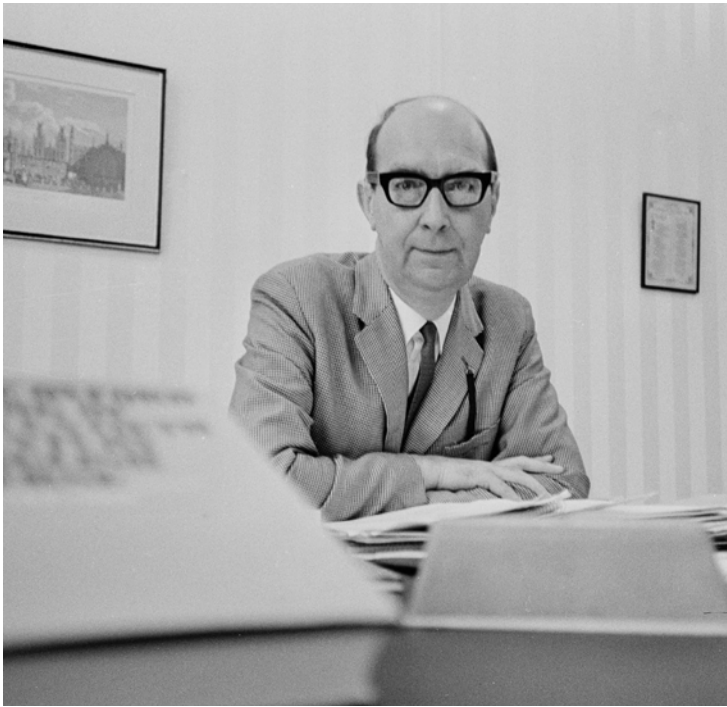


Rejected from military service during World War II, Philip Larkin graduated from Oxford University in 1943. Upon graduation he worked at several university libraries, including Queen's University in Belfast. In 1955 he became University Librarian at the University of Hull, a position that he held until his death in 1985. This library was made famous when it became the first library in Europe to install a Geac computer, and the first to have an automated online circulation system.

It was his work as a librarian that gave him the financial stability to pursue writing in his off hours as he became a noted poet and novelist. In succession he started by publishing *The North Ship*, his first book of poetry in 1945, followed in 1946 by his first novel, *Jill*, and then his second novel, *A Girl in Winter* in 1947. His second book of poems, *The Less Deceived*, in 1955 catapulted him into prominence as a writer. His other two books of poetry, *The Whitsun Weddings* (1964) and *High Windows* (1974), were critically acclaimed and further fueled his prominence.

In addition to his duties as a librarian, poet and novelist, he also served as the jazz critic for the *Daily Telegraph* from 1961-1971, becoming one of Britain's foremost experts on the jazz scene.





*Philip Larkin: Life, Art and Love*, a 2014 biography by James Booth, quotes Larkin about a colleague, “John’s being working-class was kind of equivalent of my stammer, a built-in handicap to put him one down.”

Larkin was known to assess his lifelong struggles with stuttering. The 1993 biography *A Writer’s Life: Philip Larkin* by Andrew Motion cites some of these statements. For instance, it quotes Larkin as saying, “It was on words beginning with vowels rather than consonants. There was no obvious reason for it: no left-handedness or physical accident. If I had some deep traumatic experience, I’ve forgotten it. This went on up to the age of thirty-five or so, after which the impediment slowly faded away, only to return when I am tired or confronted with a ‘stammering situation’ – post offices, for instance.”

Motion’s book contains other quotes from Larkin that address his stuttering. When writing about his family life

and upbringing, he wrote, “Second child, myself, lived in a private world, disregarding what awkward overtures he could make, and was handicapped by an embarrassing stammer.”

Larkin’s girlfriend Ruth made the statement, “He used to stammer very badly in public then, of course, but in private it soon went away.”

Larkin’s sister Kitty commented on the Larkin poem “Next Please.” She said that the poem was based on a phrase he dreaded hearing as a child whenever he reached the head of a queue at school or shops: “it meant he would shortly have to speak, which would be embarrassing because of his stammer.”

Motion continues with the interesting statement, “In all these things he struck his colleagues as far minded but brisk, devising ways of accelerating a meeting towards the conclusion he wanted it to reach. He often used his stammer for theatrical effect.”

The number of literary awards Philip Larkin earned during his long career is staggering. While never an advocate for stammering organizations, throughout his life he not only struggled with stuttering, but many times gave a fresh assessment of his life as a person who stutters.

*"Poetry should begin with emotion in the poet and end with the same emotion in the reader. The poem is simply the instrument of transference."*

*-Philip Larkin*

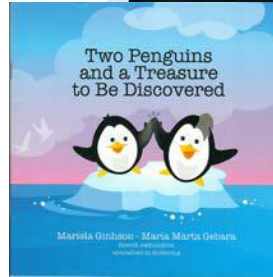


THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS  
**PAMELA MELTON**



The Stuttering Foundation mourns the loss of Pam Melton, who did our accounting work for more than 12 years. Pam passed away on November 18, 2022.

In the early years, Pam worked with Joe Fulcher to learn some of the special rules for nonprofits and for the unusual category of “operating foundation.” We pay tribute to her and celebrate a life that was well lived.



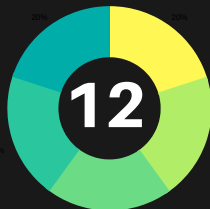
**María Marta Gebara, co-author of *Two Penguins and a Treasure to Be***

***Discovered*, presented a seminar in September 2022. You can find this very special book, written in English and Spanish, in our store at <https://store.stutteringhelp.org>.**

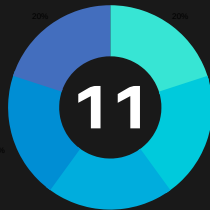
**STUTTERING FOUNDATION VIRTUAL LEARNING REACHES THE WORLD**

[www.StutteringHelp.org/VirtualLearning](http://www.StutteringHelp.org/VirtualLearning)

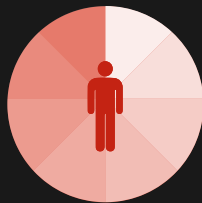
**Virtual Learning  
by Stuttering Foundation 2022**



Total Sessions



Videos added to Streaming Library



120

Attendees per session



AVG 37

Countries in each Session



237

Average Registrants per session





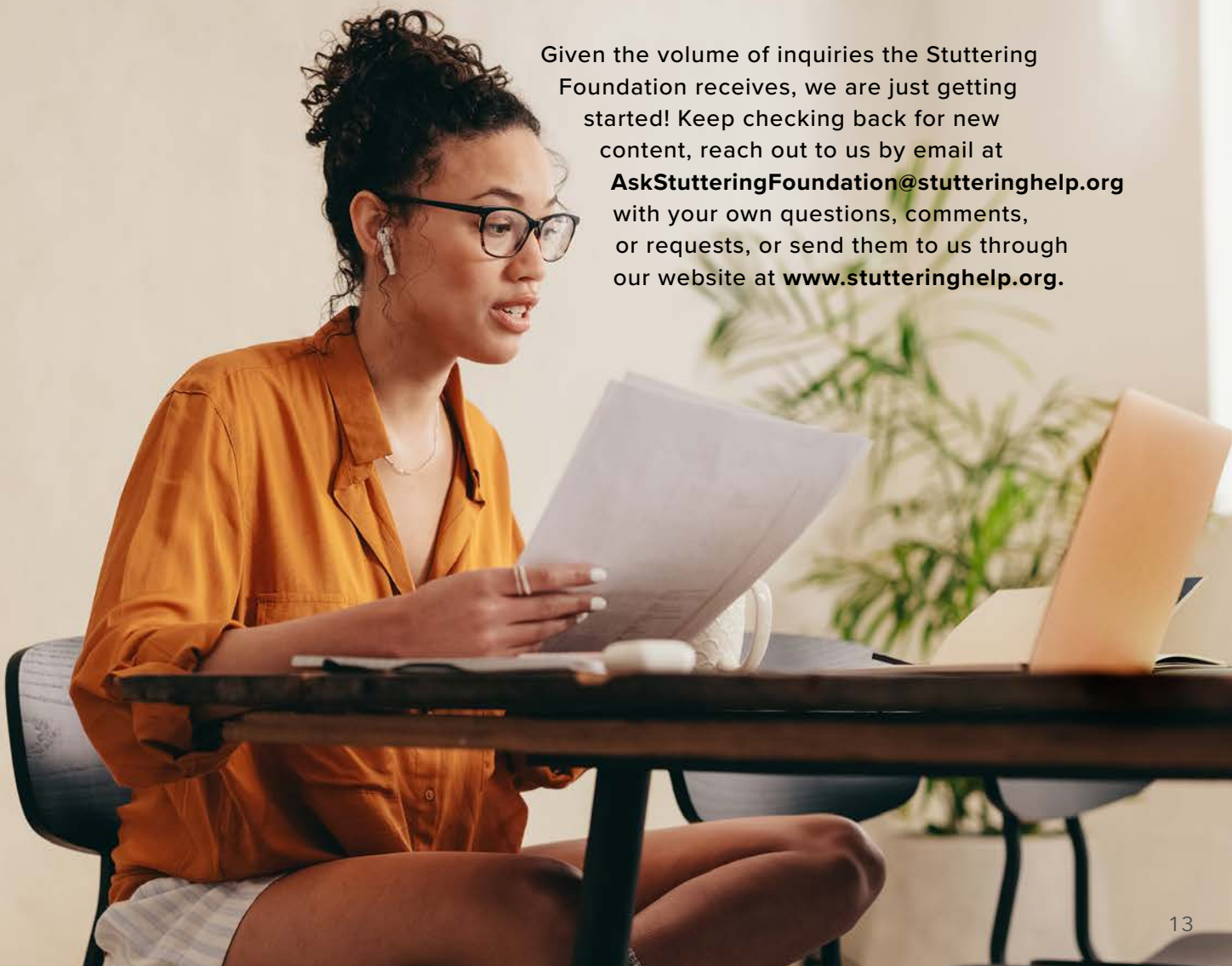
## ASK THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION

*We can help!*

One feature of our new Ask the Stuttering Foundation offering is consultation provided by Zoom or telephone to inquirers from all over the world. Since we began, our VP for Professional Development, Ellen Kelly, a specialist in stuttering, has connected with parents, grandparents, teachers, doctors, employers, speech therapists, and people of a variety of ages who stutter. Some are seeking help for themselves, their children, or their grandchildren who stutter. Others have questions about neurogenic or psychogenic stuttering, cluttering, atypical disfluencies, stuttering combined with other speech and developmental or health challenges, best practices for supporting, assessing, and/or treating students or employees who stutter, and even how to respond when a person who stutters calls 911.

In response to some of the inquiries we have received, we have created animated videos and recorded content of a few of the conversations on our new Ask the Stuttering Foundation YouTube page ([www.youtube.com/@AskSF](https://www.youtube.com/@AskSF)). So far, topics include: *Atypical disfluencies: Is this stuttering or something else? How do I help my teen who stutters with her anxiety? How can I help my teen client who stutters? My preschooler is stuttering: What should I do? How do you test oral reading fluency in students who stutter? How can I help my grandchild who stutters?*

Given the volume of inquiries the Stuttering Foundation receives, we are just getting started! Keep checking back for new content, reach out to us by email at [AskStutteringFoundation@stutteringhelp.org](mailto:AskStutteringFoundation@stutteringhelp.org) with your own questions, comments, or requests, or send them to us through our website at [www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org).





# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS ALFRED KAEHLER



Alfred Kaehler accomplished so many things. He graduated from UC Berkeley. He worked on the Manhattan Project during World War II as a mechanical engineer and Junior Scientist. He worked on many other interesting projects at SRI in Menlo Park, Lockheed, and Raychem.

"Al," as he was affectionately known, learned how to fly, owned an antique airplane, and continued to fly as the rise airport control towers forced him to talk on the radio.

He was married for more than 60 years and raised three kids. He played clarinet and saxophone in many bands, including one that met at his house every week for more than 25 years.

Stuttering forced a natural humility that was evident to all who knew Al. We children saw him overcome challenges every day, and seeing the reality of that helped us grow.

In his life, Alfred did suffer some discrimination. His units from junior college were thrown out by a Dean at Berkeley, and he had to attend for an extra year. He felt he could not effectively protest. During WWII he invented a device that would be made by Coors in Colorado. Alfred was not allowed to travel to Coors, and another engineer was sent instead.

In the 1960s, Al wrote a paper about another invention of his that is used on missiles. The paper was accepted at an aerospace symposium at JPL, but Al was pressured into letting another engineer give the talk about the paper.

Al was sent to a faith healer as a teenager to cure his stuttering. He endured the "treatment", but was happy when the travel stipend was large. He bought a new suit with the leftover funds.

Kaehler attended the National Hospital for Speech

Disorder with Dr. James Sonnett Greene, who was renowned at the time as being an expert on stuttering. He clearly admired Dr. Greene.

About 20 years ago, the Stuttering Foundation received a call from a woman in NYC who had found a portrait of Dr. Greene in the trash bin of the apartment complex where she lived. She called to see if it was of interest, because she realized "he clearly was an important person who touched many lives." The portrait included a description of him as head of the National Hospital for Speech.

Cathy Montgomery, founder of the American Institute for Stuttering in New York City, immediately went over and got the portrait of Dr. Greene. It now hangs in the AIS office in New York City.

Al kept these TALK magazines in his personal collection for most of his life. His children have generously donated these magazines to the Stuttering Foundation Archives. The article shown on the following page was printed just six months after the end of World War II.

# TALK

VOL. 27

JANUARY, 1946

No. 1

*Published monthly by*

**THE NATIONAL HOSPITAL FOR SPEECH DISORDERS**

61-63 Irving Place

GRamercy 3-0353

New York 3, N. Y

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## IT LIES WITH YOU

A good many people in their attitude toward the needs of others are a curious mixture of warm sympathy and callous indifference. If suffering touches someone close to them or someone with whose needs they identify their own, they are generous in their understanding and quick to give comfort. But if suffering is outside their immediate circle, or if it is foreign to their own personal experience, they dismiss it with a mental shrug as being someone else's responsibility.

"She has people closer to her than I am; why should I take her troubles on my shoulders?" How often we hear some paraphrase of that remark. Or, "I can't see this world brotherhood business when it always means that we foot the bill. Why should it be our responsibility to feed the starving Poles or Hottentots?"

Down the long corridor of the ages, the great humanitarians have answered that question. As John Donne, the English poet, wrote some three hundred years ago: "No man is an ilande intire to itselfe; every man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a promontoire were . . . So any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankinde; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

If you as an individual are to grow and mature and enter into a larger life, you must develop a feeling of identity with your fellow men and with their suffering and needs and aspirations. To the extent that you can do this, to that same extent will you break down your psychological bondage to your own suffering and affliction as well as make a contribution to the moral development of the world. This does not mean ranging far afield in search of opportunities to do service, but rather developing a greater awareness of the problems which face those whom you meet in your everyday contacts and a readiness to be of help. Wherever a need exists and you can fill it, or wherever there is suffering that you can help to assuage, do it. Don't stop to ask where the responsibility lies. *It lies with you!*

— James Sonnett Greene, M.D.



# STUTTERING FOUNDATION Q & A: JORDAN NORTHRUP



## **Location:**

I'm from Lima, Ohio, and I currently live in the Washington DC area.

## **Profession:**

I've been a Marine Corps Officer for 19 years. I'm also a real estate investor and published author/speaker.

## **Family:**

I've been married to my wonderful wife for 7 years. We have a 4-year-old son and a 1-year-old daughter, and they are the best part of my life.

## **Hobbies, Interests, Passions:**

One passion of mine is to help individuals and families struggling with the pain of addiction, which is sparked by my own victory over alcohol addiction. My other passion is to support fellow PWS; there aren't that many of us compared to the rest of the population. We all need examples to inspire us. I also enjoy exercise, cycling, politics, golf, woodworking.

## **Successes:**

I've had to overcome many challenges in my life to get to where I am today, specifically my life-long stutter and a 14-year addiction to alcohol.

*Jordan Northrup recently began contributing content to the Stuttering Foundation's blog. Find his writing at [stutteringhelp.org/blog](http://stutteringhelp.org/blog).*

## **SFA: Do you remember when you first began to stutter?**

**BRIAN:** I started speaking around the age of 3.5, and I began to stutter right away. I've lived with a stutter as long as I can remember.

## **Does it run in your family? Who else stutters?**

Other than my paternal grandfather, I am the only person in my family who stutters.

## **Did you seek treatment? Did it help?**

Some of my earliest memories are attending speech therapy. It was the early 80s, and SLPs didn't have the same knowledge and resources they do today. They told my mother that my stutter was too difficult to treat... a combination of silent blocks and repetitions, but not focused to the same syllables. It was too random. Even so, I continued with therapy until the end of first grade. Looking back, I wish some kind of speech therapy had continued for me during my growing up years. It was not until many years later as an adult that I received additional help for my stutter. I was on active duty in the Marines when I finally sought out the services of SLPs. Frequent public speaking is a given when you are a Marine Corps officer, and I desperately needed some help. One great SLP stands out in my mind. He helped me to visualize being at the head of the boardroom, receiving reports from my staff and having all the information I needed. This mindset helped me to remain calmer and to see myself as being in control of the situation. It was a great tool. During the course of my career, medical intervention was also helpful at times to stabilize my mood and reduce anxiety related to public speaking. While not for everyone, the support of medication helped me reinforce visualization techniques and gain more fluency.

## **Tell us about your experience with stuttering as a young child.**

Stuttering was tough during childhood. No one wants to be “different” when bullies are looking for anything to pick on. Having a stutter like mine was akin to painting a target on my back. I can remember reading aloud in the first grade. Other kids would snicker when I couldn’t read very well. I knew every word; I just couldn’t make my mouth say them properly or on demand. I vividly remember being bullied by older kids on the school playground because of my stutter. Later on, I remember choosing to stay silent when called upon in class, even though I knew the answer. Better to pretend I was clueless than be laughed at for my stutter.

## **Has your stuttering gotten worse or better since you were younger? How?**

My stuttering has gotten much easier to control as I’ve gotten older. I’ve practiced my public speaking rather than shy away from it. I’ve learned visualization and speaking techniques that helped improve my fluency. Like with anything, familiarity makes things easier. I’ve had to force myself into difficult speaking situations in order to build a level of comfort.

The more practice I get, the more comfortable I am, and the easier it is to speak fluently.

## **How does stuttering affect you in your career?**

Stuttering has not negatively affected my career. I’ve enjoyed a full and satisfying career in the Marine Corps, and I quite enjoy public speaking these days. Certainly though, there have been periods where my stutter made things quite difficult, like when I went through Marine Corps bootcamp and Officer’s Candidate School. The Drill Instructors were looking for any kind of weakness, and stuttering can be misunderstood as a lack of confidence. They were merciless to me back then for my stutter, but I survived and became stronger. Outside of Marine Corps training, I’ve never been penalized for my stutter. The Marine Corps doesn’t care how I speak; I am valued for doing my job. But my stutter has caused me professional embarrassment. As with most workplaces, it is customary to go around the room and introduce yourself at large meetings and conferences. Not being able to clearly say my full rank and name is embarrassing and sometimes sets the tone for how my peers perceive me initially.

## **How is your stuttering today? What do you do to control or manage it, if anything?**

Today I’m more fluent than not. I’m crystal clear about



who I am. I’m confident in what I know and what I can do. The work I’ve done internally in terms of mindset is vitally important to fluency. I go about my life just like any other person would do; if someone hears me stutter, then they hear me stutter. My stutter does not define me. I’ve also found that active listening lends well to fluency. So many times, I’ve been in a conversation or a meeting and I find myself just waiting for the other person to finish so I can jump in. I’m not really listening to what they’re saying, and my thoughts are jumbled and uncoordinated. Instead, being intentional about active listening allows me to fully understand the conversation and craft a response that adds value rather than filler. That extra pause makes it much easier to be fluent. I also try to avoid situations or certain sounds that I know will cause difficulty. For example, my stutter can be worse in the early mornings before I’ve had a chance to warm up my voice, so I try to schedule meetings or speaking events for later in the day rather than first thing.



## What are the biggest challenges stuttering has presented to you?

If I'm being honest, stuttering initially sent me down a dark and destructive path. My stutter affected my confidence and self-worth growing up, and I felt like an outcast. I wasn't popular in school, I kept to myself and didn't play sports, and I struggled with relationships. I sat in the back of class and kept my head down. Anything to avoid embarrassment. As I grew up, I came to believe I was damaged goods. In college, I fell hard into the party scene to cope with depression and ended up starting a 14-year severe addiction to alcohol. Even though my social and professional situation improved when I became a Marine, inside I felt like the same timid, unsettled, and unworthy little boy who couldn't speak clearly. It took an incredible amount of self-reflection, counseling, and reliance upon my Christian faith to beat my addiction and reconcile the brokenness inside me. I'm grateful to say that I have 9 years of sobriety now! I share my testimony in the hope that I can help and encourage others.

## What is your greatest accomplishment with regard to stuttering?

My greatest accomplishment regarding stuttering is to have conquered my fear of public speaking. I have given keynote addresses, been featured on podcasts, and invited to speak at numerous forums and conferences. I'm comfortable speaking to large audiences on stage and I quite enjoy public speaking these days.

## Based upon your experiences, what would you like to tell children who stutter?

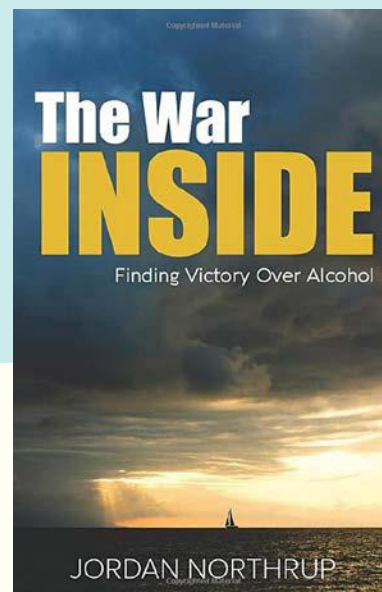
Don't let your stutter define you. Stuttering doesn't have to be something that forces you to the back of the room. You can push through the uncomfortable and become stronger as a result. Be confident in who you are and where your dreams can lead you. Stuttering is not WHO YOU ARE, it's just something you do.

## Based upon your experiences, what would you tell parents of children who stutter?

Encourage your children to not withdraw into themselves. Show support without belittling or downplaying their stutter. Hear them out on the challenges. Many children who stutter do not feel heard or validated. Remind them always that they are loved and valued. They have something unique to bring to the world that no one else can bring.

## What else should we know?

If people want to reach out, I'm on Facebook and Instagram: @jordannnorthrup. My book, *The War Inside: Finding Victory Over Alcohol*, is available on Amazon.



# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS HELEN PALIN



Michael Palin confirmed the tragic news in a post shared on his official website on Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

He announced that Helen had died in the early hours of the morning, describing her as the "bedrock of my life", and that her death was an "indescribable loss" for himself and their three children: Thomas, 54, William, 52, and Rachel, 48.

The Monty Python icon revealed that Helen had been suffering with chronic pain for several years, and had been diagnosed with kidney failure before her death.

The couple first met when they were just 16 years old, and married a few years later in 1966. They marked their 57th wedding anniversary just weeks before Helen passed away.

Michael wrote: "My dearest wife Helen died peacefully in the early hours of Tuesday morning. She had been suffering with chronic pain for several years, which was compounded a few years ago by a diagnosis of kidney failure. We first met on a summer holiday on the Suffolk coast when we were both sixteen and we married in our early twenties. Two and a half weeks ago we celebrated our 57th wedding anniversary. Her death is an indescribable loss for myself, our three children and four grandchildren. Helen was the bedrock of my life. Her quietly wise judgment informed all my decisions and her humour and practical good sense was at the heart of our life together. The family ask that their privacy be respected at this time."

No one has done more to help children who stutter than Michael Palin with Helen at his side. We join him in mourning the loss of this very talented and loving person.





# DEAR SFA:

KIDS' LETTERS TO THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION

We'd love to hear about your dreams, your victories, the fears you have faced, the ways you've been challenged, or anything you wish people knew about stuttering! If you would like to send us a picture, letter, or poem, please e-mail us at [info@stutteringhelp.org](mailto:info@stutteringhelp.org). We'll make sure you get a permission slip to fill out the needed information. We attempt to answer every child's letter personally, so be sure to include a contact name and postal addresses for either a parent or the SLP of the child along with your submission.\*

*\*Please mail original artwork submissions on plain, unlined paper. Photocopies, scans and faxes of artwork cannot be accepted. Colorful markers and crayons are encouraged as pencil drawings can be difficult to reprint. If you'd rather submit a photo, it can be mailed directly along with your permission slip and letter; digital photos can be sent via email.*

For more information and/or to receive a permission form via email, please contact us at [info@stutteringhelp.org](mailto:info@stutteringhelp.org).

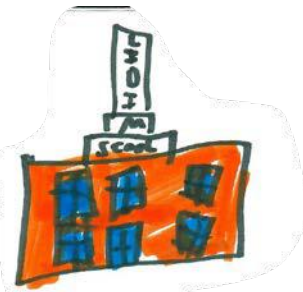
Mail your letter, permission form, original color artwork and/or photographs to:

The Stuttering Foundation  
P.O. Box 11749  
Memphis, TN 38111-0749





Hello, my name is Eli. I am 10 years old, and I go to school at Boone Middle School. I like to play with Legos and my computer. Also, I like the Cyclones, Hawkeys, and the Green Bay Packers.



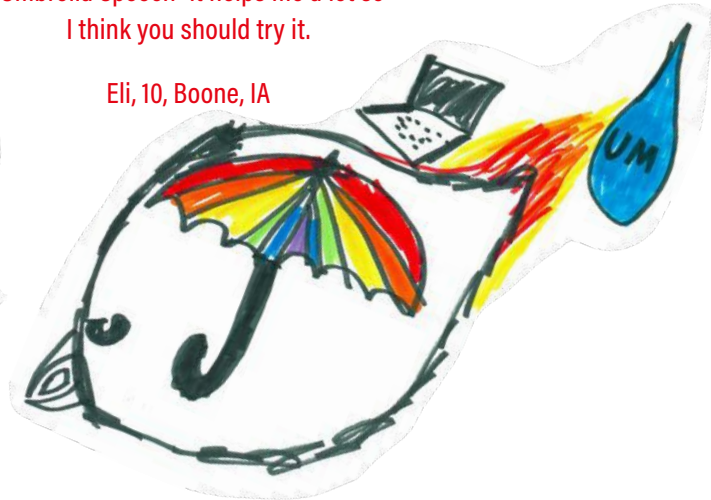
Sometimes I say 'um' when I think I am going to stutter so I made up a speech strategy called, "Umbrella Speech."

The "Umbrella Speech" is when I think of my 'ums' in my sentences like the rain.



When I put up the 'umbrella' there will be no more 'um' in my sentences. The umbrella speech is a good strategy so maybe you should try it sometime. Whenever I use the "Umbrella Speech" it helps me a lot so I think you should try it.

Eli, 10, Boone, IA

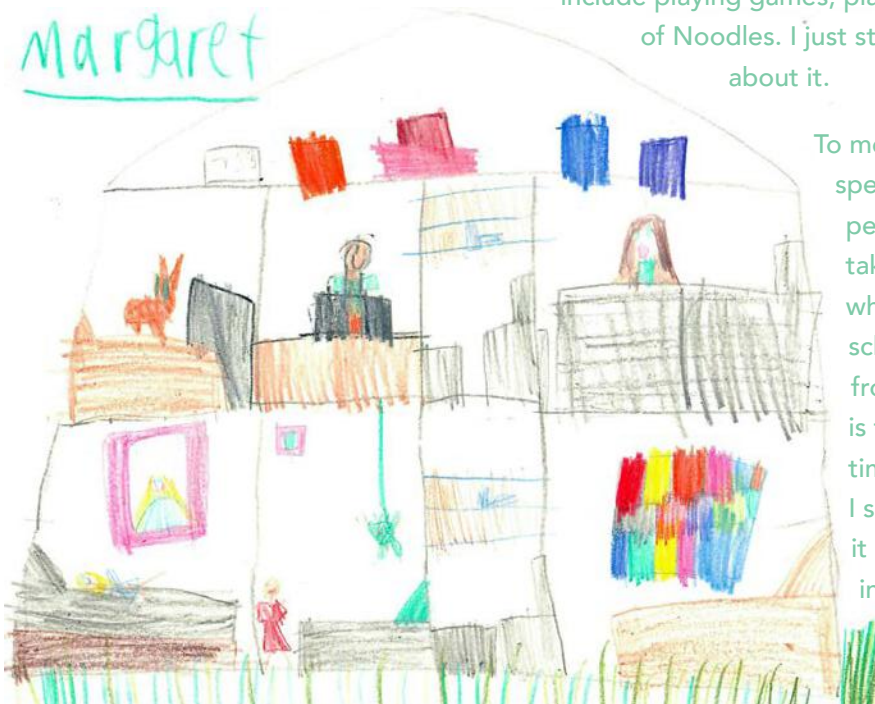


Hi! My name is Aiden, and I am 8 years old in 2nd grade. I live in Estero, Florida. I love to play flag football. My favorite stuttering strategy is full breath because it works the best for me. It is okay to stutter so my advice is to try to not be nervous about stuttering.

Aiden, 8, Estero, FL

Hi, my name is Margaret and I'm 8 years old. Some of my interests include playing games, playing with my cat Hops, and eating Cup of Noodles. I just started Girl Scouts and I'm really excited about it.

Margaret



To me, stuttering is when you have bumpy speech and have trouble talking in front of people. When I stutter, I like to stop and take a breath and start my words again when air starts to come out. Sometimes in school, it feels very nerve-racking to talk in front of my class. Something that helps me is thinking about what I want to say ahead of time and writing it down. If I'm reading and I see a word I don't know, I try and sound it out using techniques I learned in school instead of panicking. It's okay to stutter even if some people laugh at you.

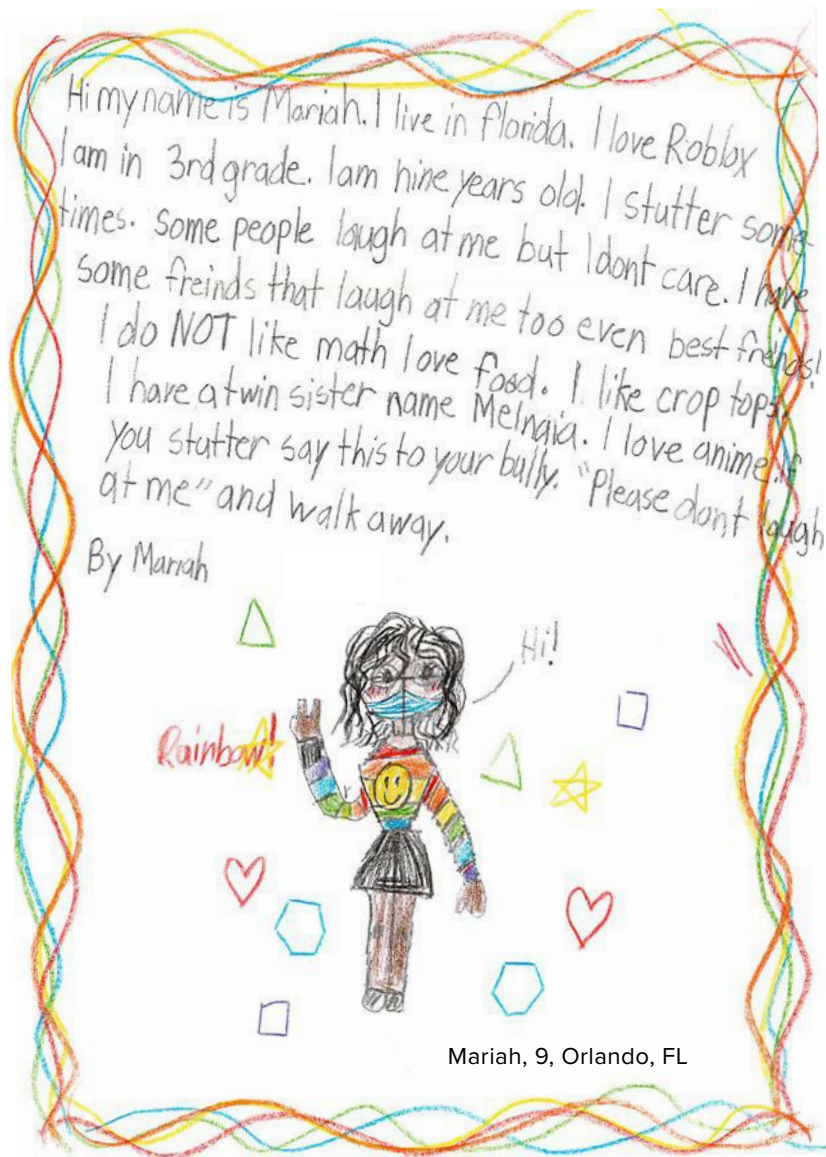
Margaret, 8, Boulder, CO



Hola me llamo Alan y tengo 7 años. Yo vivo en Madison y estoy en primer grado. Me gusta cocinar huevos atados y sopa con mi mamá. En la casa me gusta jugar con dinosaurios y carros. También, me gustan mucho los perros. Con mi familia me gusta ir de vacaciones, como a Disney World! También, en la casa hablamos en español. En la escuela mis cosas favoritas son el recreo, especialmente jugando gaga ball y fútbol, y también las matemáticas. En la escuela, hablamos y aprendemos en español y en inglés! La tartamudez no me molesta mucho y me gusta aprender sobre la tartamudez.

Alan, 7, Madison, WI

*Hello, my name is Alan and I am 7 years old. I live in Madison and I'm in first grade. I like to cook fried eggs and soup with my mom. At home I like to play with dinosaurs and cars. Also, I really like dogs. With my family I like to go on vacation, like to Disney World! Also, in my house we speak in Spanish. At school my favorite things are recess, especially playing gaga ball and soccer, and also math. At school, we speak and learn in Spanish and English. Stuttering doesn't bother me much and I like to learn about stuttering!*



Mariah, 9, Orlando, FL

Hi. My name is Alex. I live in Cyprus which is an island in the Mediterranean Sea.

I started stuttering when I was 5 years old. When my stuttering became serious, I went to two therapists, but I did not like their way of teaching me how to overcome stuttering. I felt this was not helping me. Then I went to a third therapist who has helped me a lot. My techniques are pausing and pseudostuttering. I also changed the way I think about stuttering. Now I know that stuttering is not something that makes you less smart. I happen to be bilingual (Greek and English), and I found out that being bilingual is actually really cool. Sometimes though, children who are bilingual may repeat words and need some extra time when switching between the two languages. I am now confident to talk to other people in both languages. I don't get anxious anymore.

My reading needs a little bit of work, still. I am certain though, that I will improve this too, very soon.

My favorite food is pizza, I love to play soccer and I like Fortnite.



Alexandros, 10, Deryneia, Cyprus

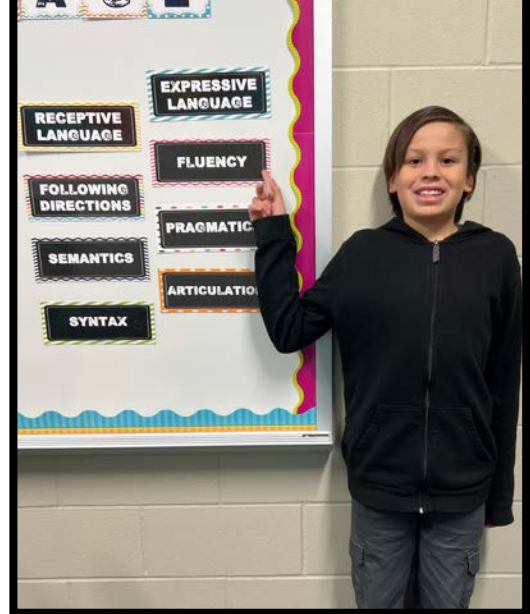


**MY NAME IS OLIVIA DAWN. I'M IN 2ND GRADE AND I'M 8 YEARS OLD. I LIKE TO SWING, PLAY ON MY TABLET, AND PLAY WITH SLIME. MY FAVORITE THINGS ARE MY FAMILY, MY DOG BAXTER, PLAYING OUTSIDE, AND PIZZA. WHEN I GROW UP, I WANT TO BE AN AUTHOR BECAUSE I'M GOOD AT WRITING. SOMETIMES I STUTTER. THE STRATEGY THAT HELPS MOST IS SLOW RATE. I LEARNED THAT STUTTERING IS OKAY.**

**OLIVIA, 8, ALBION, NY**

**Hi my name is Ethan and I'm in fifth grade at Jared Eliot Middle School. I live in Clinton, Connecticut. I like soccer and video games. I also like playing with my friends. Going to the beach is a calming activity for me. I've stuttered since I was four years old. I have a hard time saying words that begin with vowels. I try to use "easy onset" to begin those words. It works for me sometimes. I like going to speech therapy, because my speech therapist helps me and understands me. My message to other kids who stutter is "never give up" and "don't let people get in the way of what you need to say."**

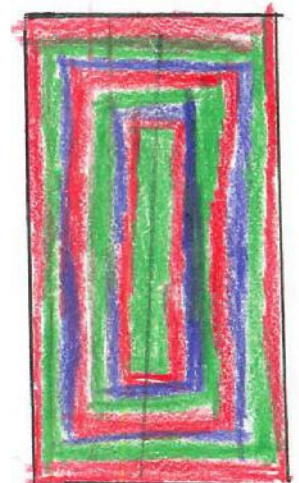
**Ethan, 11, Clinton, CT**



Hello, my name is Wakin. I am 10 years old, and I like soccer. My favorite player is Cristiano Ronaldo. My favorite soccer team is Real Madrid. I started to stutter when I was in first grade. Since then, I've been receiving help from my speech teacher at school. I have learned that using my strategies helps me to become a more fluent speaker. The strategy that I like is called stretchy speech. Some advice I would like to tell other kids who stutter is:

1. You can achieve anything
2. Always use your strategies when you need them.
3. Your speech does not need to be perfect because you are perfect the way you are.

Wakin, 10  
Sioux City, IA





Hola, me llamo Alexis y tengo 6 años. A mí me gusta ayudar a mi mamá en casa y jugar con mis juguetes favoritos que son dinosaurios y carros. Tengo un perro que se llama Bella, y me encanta jugar con ella. También, me gusta jugar fútbol y estar con mi familia. Voy a una escuela bilingüe, donde aprendemos en inglés y en español. A mí me gusta ir a la escuela. Me gusta la clase de matemáticas y jugando gaga ball en el recreo! A veces me molesta la tartamudez un poco. Me gustaría aprender más sobre la tartamudez.

Alexis, 6, Madison, WI

*Hello, my name is Alexis and I am 6 years old. I like to help my mom at home and play with my favorite toys, which are dinosaurs and cars. I have a dog named Bella, and I love to play with her. Also, I like to play soccer and be with my family. I go to a school, bilingual, where we learn in English and Spanish. I like to go to school. I like math class and playing gaga ball at recess! Sometimes stuttering annoys me a little bit. I would like to learn more about stuttering.*

Hi, my name is Ethan. I'm 10 years old. I live in Balaton, Minnesota. I like cops because they protect people. I want to be a cop when I grow up. I also like the military because they serve our country. And I also want to be in the military when I grow up and I want to be in the Army. I want to do these things because my two grandpas were in World War II. I'm a person who stutters. This is what I have learned:



1. That it is ok to stutter!
2. I like the strategy cancellation.
3. I use repetitions when I stutter.

Ethan, 10, Balaton, MN

Hi, my name is Eva and I am a 10 year old girl who stutters. I live in Colorado and am from it too. I love playing with my dogs, reading, planting and riding on my scooter!!

Techniques I use from helping me stutter is stretching, bouncing and take deep breaths. They help me calm myself down when I know I am going to stutter.

Eva, 10, Firestone, CO



Hello! We are 4th graders from Clifford M. Granger School in Feeding Hills, MA. We are in a stuttering group with Mrs. Gagnon, our speech therapist. We learned that it is ok to stutter and you shouldn't feel ashamed. In speech, we practice using strategies, like easy onset and cancellation. When we were in third grade, we researched a famous person that stuttered. We presented our projects to the entire 3rd and 4th grade in our school. We also taught them about stuttering.



My name is Aidan and I stutter. I stutter mostly when I am excited or nervous. I like to play Roblox, Legos, and baseball. I also designed a logo

using silk interactive art. Anyone that stutters out there is not alone. I even performed as the emcee at our Veteran's Day assembly this year!

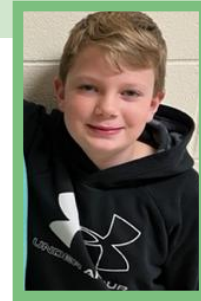
Aidan, 10, Feeding Hills, MA



My name is Khizar and I stutter a lot so I don't always like to talk. However, I did read the morning announcements at school this year! I really enjoy playing

video games and learning about cars. When someone says mean things to me about my stuttering online, I just mute them or switch to another game!

Khizar, 9, Feeding Hills, MA



My name is Owen and I am really chill about my stuttering- I don't

really mind it. I like to create animation online. I mostly edit using Roblox Studio.

Owen, 9, Feeding Hills, MA



Hi! My name is Abu. I am 10 1/2 years old and in the 6th grade. I go to Roosevelt Elementary in Rahway, New Jersey. I like airplanes.

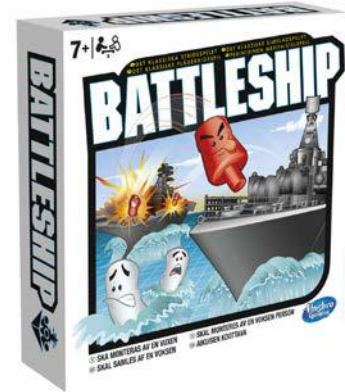
I also like video games. My favorite video games are Fortnite, Madden, Minecraft, and Fifa. My favorite sports team is the NY Giants (football). I have 2 siblings and a pet parakeet named Mango. I started stuttering when I was 7 or 8. If I slow down, I can avoid stuttering. You can avoid stuttering too! :)

Abu, 10.5, Rahway, NJ



Hi my name is Anthony and I stutter. I love reading books, but my stutter doesn't stop me from reading books. I always try my best and I don't get frustrated when I stutter. Don't give up when you have a stutter. Be brave when you are talking to the class. Don't be nervous. It is a thing that you just have. I am from the usa.

Anthony, 10, Naples, FL



Hey, my name is Ky'Rin. I am 9 years old. I am also a twin. I am graduating from speech. I like my stutter. I loved speech. I like to play Battleship for fun.

Ky'Rin, 9, Peoria, IL





this is my  
tiger, ron'n

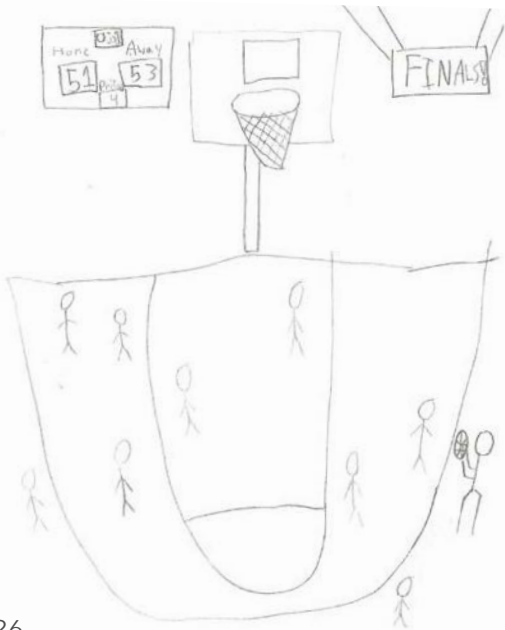


My name is ron'n  
and I live in  
Pittsburgh PA.  
I like to go  
to speech.  
I like playing games  
with Miss Forest  
and using easy  
starts.

ron'n, age 6

**Hi! My name is Jacob. I am in first grade. I like to eat chocolate and ride in cars. I also love cats, pizza, and games. When I grow up, I want to be a mechanic because my dad does it. Sometimes I stutter. The strategy that helps me the most is east starts. In speech class I learned about how to make a pacer board.**

**Jacob, 7, Albion, NY**



**My name is Zaelen and I am 10 years old. I live in Vermont. I love playing sports such as soccer, basketball, and football. Stuttering to me feels like trying to take a three pointer with one second left in the finals when you are down by two points. My favorite sports teams are the Minnesota Vikings, Liverpool FC, and the Boston Celtics. If I could give advice to anyone it would be to ignore any bullies and just go on with your life and have a good time.**

**Zaelen, 10, Burlington, VT**

Hi, I am Olivia. I am 13 years old. I have one sister, two pets, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. I stutter most of the time. Stuttering is when you can't get a word out when you are saying something in a sentence. I use easy onsets, pausing, and square breathing to help with my stuttering. It is okay to stutter sometimes. I play the piano and the clarinet. I am a cheerleader. I want to be a vet when I grow up to help pets. I play video games like Mario, Sonic, Pokémon, and many other video games. I have been challenged to Monopoly by my family to see how much money and properties we have to win the game. My favorite animal is a penguin. My least favorite animal is a snake. I hope you can stay confident of your stuttering.

Olivia, 13, Gillespie, IL





My name is Ben. I am 8 years old and in the third grade. I like playing my Nintendo Switch, building with my Legos and making marble runs. I'm in 4-H. I have a dog, cat and two cows at my house. Sometimes when I stutter it makes me feel sad, but I try to remember to use my "tools." My advice to younger kids who stutter is, you are not alone!

Ben, 8, Norwalk, OH

Hello, my name is Avery  
 I am 10 years old, I have a lot of friends but here are my best friends Sophie, Jasie, Dylan, Hannah. I love Christmas movies and Halloween and I like to watch stranger thing and a few others. I started stuttering a long time ago so I am used to it by now but sometimes it is hard. Because I used to get made fun and get looks when I talked but I learned it's fine if I stutter because I know I am trying my best by using strategies like stretchy speech and others and that helps me a lot. And if you stutter you are perfectly fine you are so special and I hope you can get to learn that! bye ♥

Avery, 10, Grosselle, MI

Hello, My name is Ryland and I'm from Allen, Texas And I love baseball. I stutter a bunch ~~with~~ with repetition and prolongation and block. When I stutter it feels like lightning is striking my mouth. And it also feels like a bee stings my throat all the time

Example

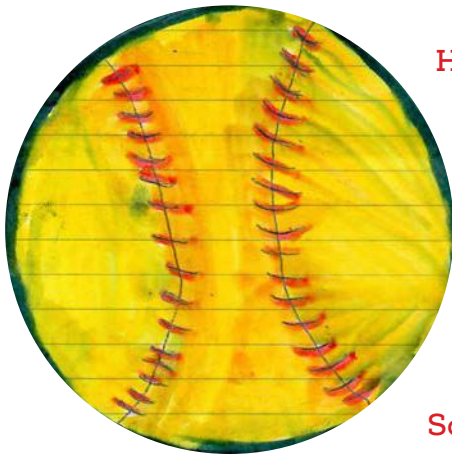
Ryland, 9, Allen, TX



Hi my name is Liam and I am in the 5th grade. I play a game called Ark Survival Evolved. It's a game where you tame dinosaurs and use them to fight bosses. There's a PVP with your dinosaurs and I think it's super fun. You can even raid a base and team up with your friend. What has helped me with my stuttering is my speech teacher and practicing my strategies. I like to use slow speech and pausing.

Liam, 10, Hewitt, TX





Hi, my name is Sadie and I am 10 years old. I go to Eastside Elementary School. I am a twin. I play softball. I like to watch football even though I do not know what is going on. I go to church and I love make-up. Strategies for speech: breathe in your nose and out your mouth and keep your words slow. If you get stuck on a word, think about it and don't go too fast on your words. If people bully you, don't let it get in your head. If you stutter don't worry it is okay.

Sadie, 10, Rockmart, GA



My name is Blake, I am eight years old. I stutter but I feel most comfortable talking to my sister and friends. They know I stutter and if anyone is teasing me, they will stand up to them. I first started stuttering when I was 5 years old. Stuttering is not normal to other people because they aren't used to it and don't know it.

Blake, 8, Norwood, MA



Hello! My name is Zhamy'II. I am 9 years old and in the 4th grade. My favorite game is Roblox Doors and Split Gate. Roblox monsters from Doors are like my stuttering. The first monster is Rush. Rush is like my whole word repetitions. The second monster is Seek. Seek is like my blocks and quiet stutters. The third monster is Figure. He is like my prolongations. I am the Figure-Unstutter and I use the holy crucifix and holy flashlight to defeat the stuttering monsters. The holy

crucifix lets me do easy starts. The holy flashlight lets me do stretching. When I use these, I kill the stuttering monsters.

Zhamy'II, 9, Kenosha, WI

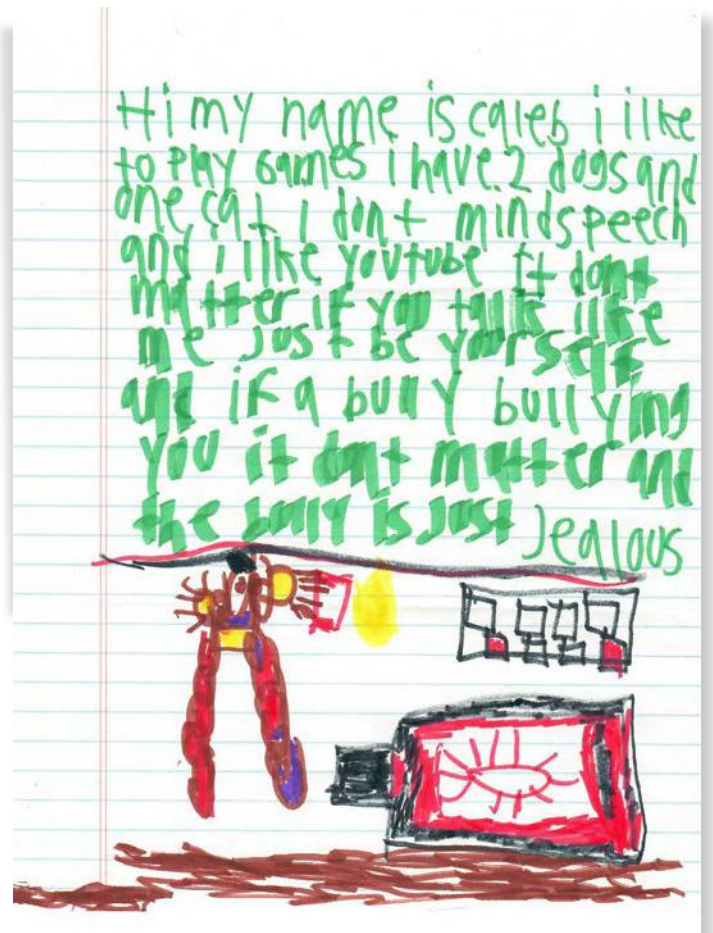
Hi, my name is Sancia. I am 9 years old, and I am in the 4th grade. I'm from Dayton, Ohio. I have two siblings and a stepsister. I mostly tell jokes and help the little kids at school. My favorite game is Roblox. I love dogs and I love to take a big nap! I love to draw, too. Stuttering is a challenge for me, and I use comedy and being the class clown to help. I get good grades. If you bully someone for stuttering, you don't know how unique they are. Only 3% of people in the world stutter. It's like having a 6th sense with super senses because when you stutter, your other senses are stronger. Stuttering is my unique feature. Bullying is like wanting to hurt their feelings and you are just hurting yourself.



Sancia, 9, Dayton, OH

**In Stuttering Group at Kennedy Krieger Institute, we are thankful for:**

- A**ctivities and **A**wareness
- B**amboozle (our favorite competition) and **B**ravery
- C**reativity and **C**omputers
- D**erren
- E**motions (it's important to talk about them!)
- F**riends
- G**roup and **G**ames
- H**omework (yeah, we admit it)
- I**nterjections and **I**ntroductions
- J**okes
- K**ate and **K**in
- L**ineage (stuttering runs in families)
- M**etaphors
- N**azim
- O**ptions (we have the power to choose)
- P**ausing
- Q**uestions
- R**yder
- S**taories
- T**alking (our favorite)
- U**nderstanding stuttering
- V**ocal cords
- W**ords
- e**Xperts in stuttering
- Y**outh (we're talking about stuttering now!)
- Z**oom



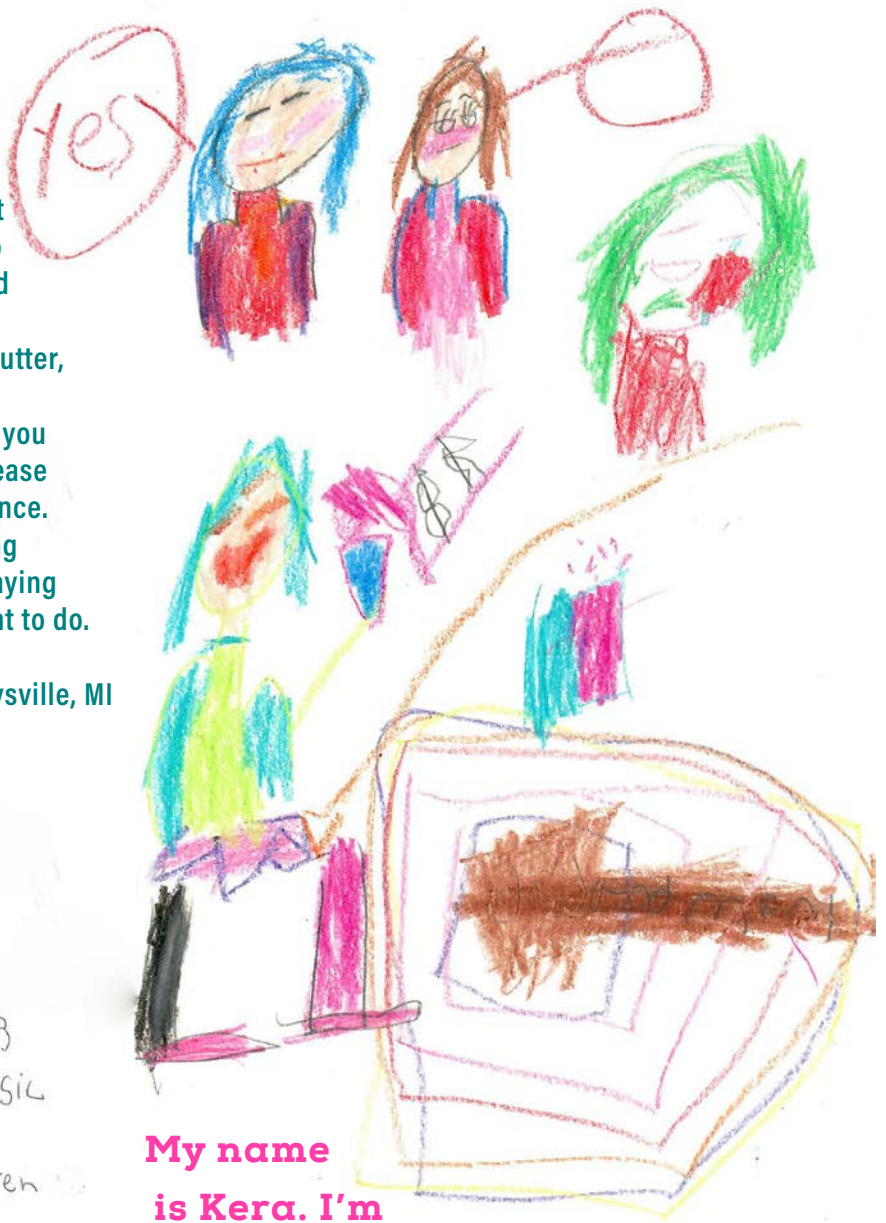
Caleb, 8, Boston, MA





Hi, I am Callum and I love basketball. My dream is to become a professional player. I have a word art about myself, and it has two strategies (pull out) and (easy onset). Pull out is where if you hear a stutter, you stop and retry it. Easy onset is where you do a fake stutter to ease into a word or sentence. Don't let stuttering stop you from saying what you want to do.

Cal, 11  
Marysville, MI



**My name is Kera. I'm in 2nd grade. My favorite animals are kittens. I love to play Roblox. When I grow up, I want to be a teacher. I like to go to speech. Sometimes I stutter. In speech I learned how to use a pacer board. The pacer board helps me slow down and have smooth speech. I would like to make a video on CapCut to help others that stutter.**

**Kera, 8, Albion, NY**

Dear fellow citizens, I've got stuttering issues my name is Calvin Ouhmyre I am 4 years old and I love country music when I grow up I want to be a musician I love my speech teacher Mrs. Lauren Bunch and I also love my family I think my 3rd grade teacher Mrs. Vanessa Cassel. I don't like my stuttering issues I hope you like my potrait!

Me Calvin



My name is Liam and I am 8 years old. I have a stutter. When I stutter, I have mostly prolongations, a few repetitions, and sometimes I have blocks. I like to use my strategy of going slow and to stretch it out when I stutter. It can sometimes make me nervous to talk at school. I feel most comfortable talking at baseball practice, basketball practice, at home, and at speech therapy. I feel like my friends and my family understand my speech. I like to use my speech to tell jokes and talk about Pokémon. My advice to other kids who stutter is to learn strategies and take deep breaths.



Liam, 8, Fuquay Varina, NC

Hi, my name is Kimber, I am eight years old and in second grade, I go to Eastside Elementary and my speech teacher is Mrs. Hillhouse. Something about me is I like to play Roblox and I have five people in my family. This is my third year in speech and I want you to know it is okay to stutter. My stutter is much better now. I use to stutter so much I couldn't say "I" without saying it two times. I love going to speech and stuttering is okay you can always improve, etc.

Kimber  
Rockmart 6A  
ages 8



Hi, my name is Lindell. I am 10 years old, and I use my easy starts to control my stutter. I started stuttering when I was 6. Sometimes kids would mock me when I stutter and sometimes I get mad or just walk away to cool down. I like to play my games and play Fortnite and Roblox. My hobbies are playing games and they cool me down. Lindell, 10, Chicago, IL

Hi, my name is Jaylin. I like to sing and I like to play Fortnite. I started stuttering when I was 4. I use easy onsets and pausing and cancellations to slow down my stutter from happening. It helps by using all my strategies. I ignore the mean comments by telling the teacher or ignoring people.

Jaylin, 11, Chicago, IL







Hi! My name is Julia. I am eleven years old and live in Boulder, Colorado. Some of my favorite things to do are read, write, color, paint, draw, make jewelry, go to school, go to the library, hang out with my friends, and play with my sister. Like many people, I stutter. I don't think that my classmates notice that I stutter. Sometimes I feel nervous to present in class because I'm worried that I'll stutter. Presenting in class is like getting a shot at the doctor because the worst part is worrying about it and when it's over you realize it wasn't really that bad. When I know I'm going to stutter, I take a deep breath and use my easy-onset technique. If anyone brings up my stuttering I tell them, "When I stutter, a word or phrase gets stuck in my throat, and I can't talk. I'm not ashamed of it, and it's part of who I am".

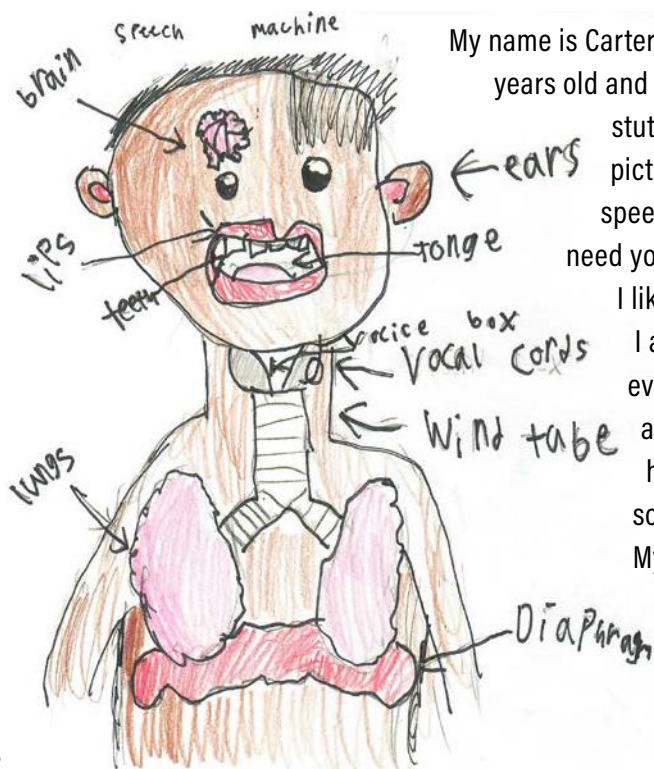
Julia

Julia, 11, Boulder, CO

Hi, my name is Tristen. I go to Southside Elementary. I am in the 4th grade. My favorite game is Madden 23. I like playing football. I stutter when I talk fast. Cancellations help me when I stutter. When I stutter, I feel embarrassed, but stuttering does not stop me from talking. Stuttering is hard to get rid of, but I push through it. I wish my family knew that I can't help when I stutter, but I try. I'm thankful for the Stuttering Foundation for helping me find other people that stutter.



Tristen, 9, West Point, MS



My name is Carter and I go to Rollan Melton Elementary School in Reno, NV. I am 9 years old and I have been stuttering for 3 years, but I am learning to control my stuttering with H-cushions, deep breaths, and stretching. This is a picture of my speech machine. The tongue and teeth are part of the speech machine and are very important for speech. For example, you need your tongue and teeth to make the "th" sound and the "s" sound.

I like to play MLB The Show 22. I play basketball, baseball, and piano. I am learning speech even more every Tuesday. I also learned that everyone has stuttering sometimes. I even learned that Ed Sheeran and Tiger Woods stutter. Also, Isaac Newton stuttered. My favorite holiday is Christmas, and my Elf comes at Christmas, Halloween, sometimes Fall, and sometimes Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day. My favorite football team is the 49ers, my favorite basketball team is the Warriors, and my favorite baseball team is the Giants. I will continue doing speech and trying my hardest.

Carter, 9, Reno, NV

“Welcome to Red Robin, Can I get you something to drink?” Mmm..something sweet and malty would do it. I’ll order a root beer I happily decided. My friends ordered first and then the waiter’s focus turned to me. Oh no! That sick feeling in my stomach showed up again. Everyone’s looking at me now. I have to order! “Can I have a rrrroo”. Here it comes, I can feel my face burn up, no need to look in the mirror of how red I look and embarrassed I am becoming. The waiter asked me again, and I said, “I’ll just have a Sprite.” No, man, what am I doing? I can’t get the words out. Ugh, here we go again. Another internal battle in my mind where I want a root beer but can only say, “Sprite.” Most people wouldn’t think twice about ordering a drink, but when you have a stutter, it’s these little things in life that can turn an everyday situation into a very stressful experience.

I have had a stutter for as long as I can remember. Although early on I never considered it as a problem or cared what people thought of me when I stuttered. This changed during eighth grade. My perception of my stutter and how I participated in school changed, and for the worse. I was in a math class nervously going over an answer to a question in my head that the teacher was about to ask me. Negative 2, Negative 2, Negative 2. Just say it! As soon as the teacher called on me, that sick feeling in my stomach ran through my body as I began to speak. “The answer is Neeee.” The humiliation was overwhelming as the confused faces of my classmates began to laugh. With a puzzled look, my teacher asked me the question again. I fearfully said, “Sorry, the answer is Neee ... Negative 2.”

As I entered high school and with new challenges introduced by COVID-19, the emotional struggles increased as my stuttering became more severe coupled with more concerns in how my peers and teachers would react. Surprisingly, it seemed that many of my teachers didn’t understand how a stutter could occur in some situations and not in others. Although I maintained a solid academic performance exhibited by my grades, the emotional stress brought on by my stutter introduced additional challenges with class participation and social interactions.

I needed to do something in order to discontinue being held hostage to my stutter! I began to receive therapy through a speech pathologist and from speech services in high school under an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Through hard work, self-practice and support from my high school speech teacher and family I have become more fluent in my speech by using strategies taught to me about being more confident in managing this personal challenge and with stressful speaking situations. These strategies included taking deeper breaths and slowing my speech when answering questions in class or conversing with my friends during lunch.

Now as I am more self-aware, I accept the fact that I may never completely overcome stuttering and rather, it is a part of who I am. It is through the ups and downs of my speech impairment that I have come to appreciate the mini successes I experience with my communication. It took me a while to get where I am today, and I know there are more challenges ahead. I’m not going to settle for less than I want, be it root beer or anything else.

Justin, 17, Center Valley, PA







My name is Sei'Vonn. I live in Pittsburgh, and I stutter. I am 11 years old. I like to play Fortnite, Minecraft, Roblox, and GTA 5. Speech is hard because we have to pseudo-stutter with repetitions. My [speech] teacher says to do easy start, so I am not tense. I am getting better at it. We also do pull out so we can pull out of a stutter. I also play football and basketball. My favorite subject is math because it is very easy. I am not very good at reading. It is hard.

Sei'Vonn, Pittsburgh, PA

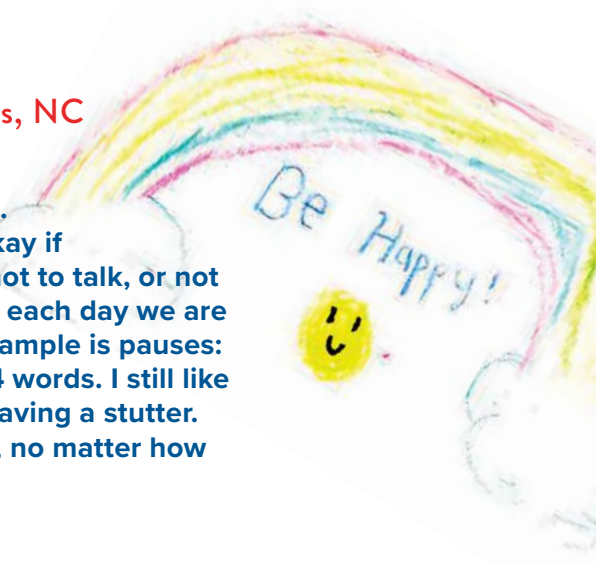
My name is Charlie, and I am 8 years old. I like airplanes and I like to collect models of them. And I like to play outside when I can.

I really like winter and my favorite holiday is Christmas. I've been going to speech therapy, and I have blocks, repetitions, and prolongations. Sometimes it frustrates when others interrupt me when I'm talking, and I never really get to finish my sentence or what I'm trying to say. I'm a little bit afraid to stutter or just talk in public, like at the store for example. I might just talk to my brother or my mom or dad. My favorite strategy is pause and phrase. It helps me a lot and it fits me well. When you pause and phrase, you pause and then keep talking. When you're saying a sentence or telling someone something or yelling to someone or many other things. Easy onset fits me well when I'm saying single words, but I'd rather use pause and phrase when telling stories. My advice to other kids who stutter is go to speech therapy. It is OK to stutter—more people stutter than you think. There are about 80 million people in the world who stutter, worldwide.

Charlie, 8  
Holly Springs, NC

Hello, my name is Eliana and I'm 9 years old and I'm in 4th grade. I just wanted to let you know it's okay if you have a stutter. It's okay if you're different. Like me, I also have a stutter but it's no reason not to talk, or not to participate in class, because out there people are like you and each day we are getting better. If you do have a stutter, we have strategies. An example is pauses: stop or pause for 1 or 2 seconds to think and do this every 3 or 4 words. I still like drawing and I do swimming every week day. I feel like it's okay having a stutter. And I feel happy that I'm getting help. Keep doing what you love, no matter how different you are. Never give up!

Eliana, 9, Sunnyvale, CA







Hi, my name is Maddie and I live in Colorado. I was born in New York City. I have a pet cat named Sapphire. I like to play games on my iPad, and I like to hang out with Sapphire and my friends and family. I stutter a lot and it's okay because I know how to fix it. I've been in speech therapy for 2 years. When I'm stuttering, I use easy-talk. Easy-talk is when we use slow and kind words. I want people to know that it is okay to stutter, and you can always use easy-talk.

Maddie, 5, Boulder, CO



Hi, my name is Tay and I am 9 years old. My favorite games are Minecraft and GTA5. My favorite candy is Pop Rocks and Mr. Beast chocolate bars. At school, I like to play soccer at recess. I love to go out to Noodles and Co. with my mom. My favorites are Japanese pan noodles (with no mushrooms and no meat) and pot stickers. I think stuttering is ok and I don't get nervous about stuttering. I feel happy when I can speak in front of my class.

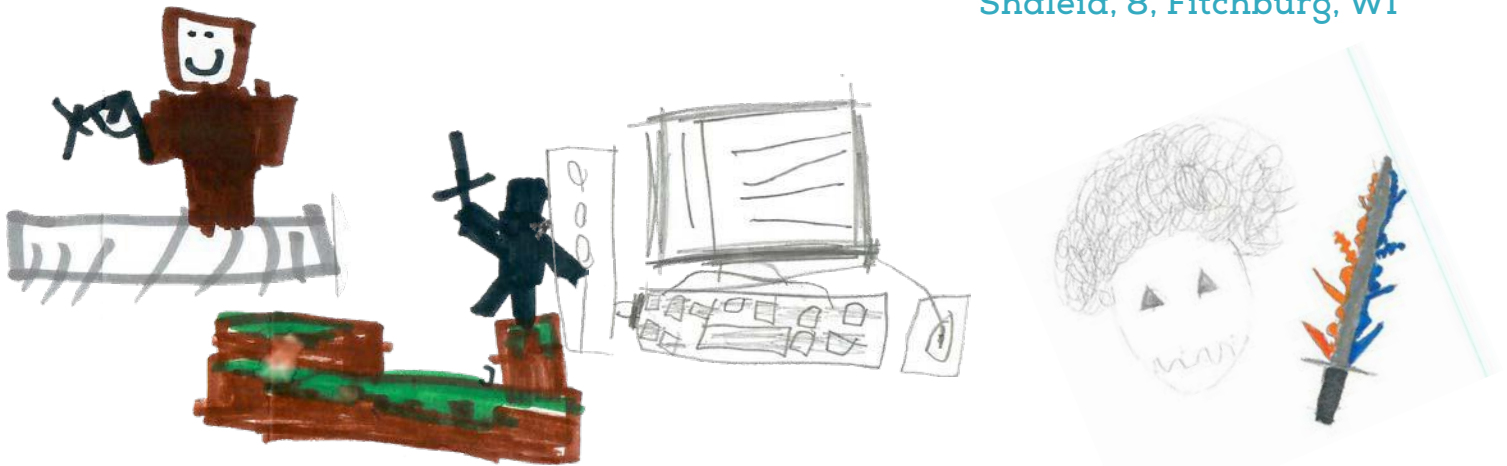
Tay, 9, Madison, WI





My name is Shaleia and I'm 8 years old. I love LOL Surprise dolls. I like to watch The Show and I have a big doll house at home. I also like to ride my bike with my brother and sister. I don't even need training wheels! My favorite things about school are movement breaks outside and art class. I don't like quizzes. Stuttering makes me feel nervous. I stutter more at school than at home.

Shaleia, 8, Fitchburg, WI



Hi, my name is Christian. I am 9 years old. I like to play Minecraft and Roblox. I get stuck on a word, and I stop and just think and I go!

Christian, 9, Sachse, TX

Hi, my name is Tyran. I am 9 years old. I have a twin brother, he stutters too. And I am graduating! I like to go to New Orleans. I like speech.

Tyran, 9, Peoria, IL



Sophia, 10, Indianapolis, IN

### Unique Feathers

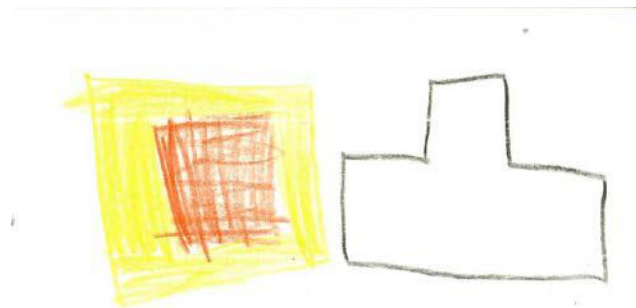
By Sophia

Your lips move like soft waves  
 your voice are like diamonds  
 some words are hard as rock  
 some are soft as a birds feather  
 and when you say what you wanted to say  
 that bird takes of with just one gentle push

Your word are you diamonds  
 but now your words have wings

My words have wings  
 but different types of wings  
 Because my words  
 They don't come out like soft waves  
 They come out choppy and bumpy  
 Like rubbing your hand on a rock  
 But that is what makes my words  
 my words

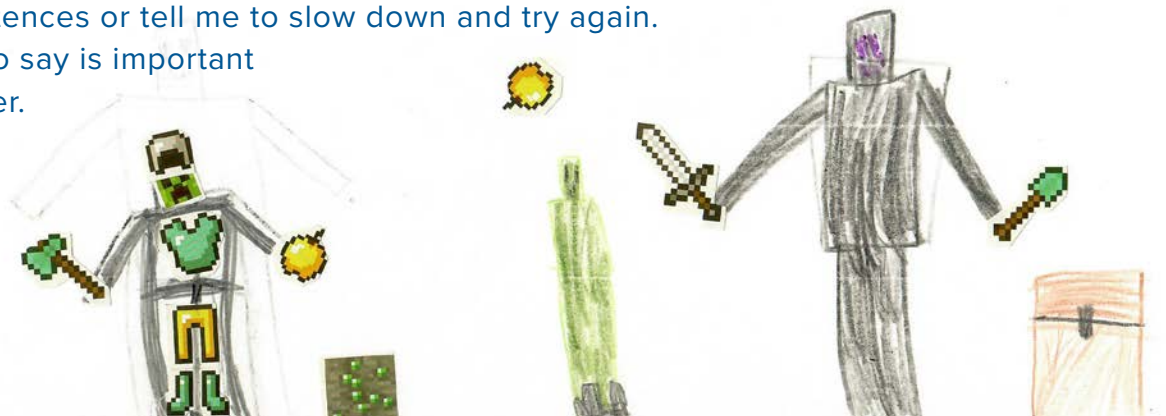
And my words are **unique**



Hi, my name is Graham. I was born in Colorado and still live here. My favorite video game is Minecraft, and my favorite board game is Sorry. Over the summer I went on a cool hiking trip to the Alps, and we got to spend 2 days in Paris. I've been stuttering since kindergarten. I like to use easy-talk to stop stuttering. Stuttering does not prevent me from talking in class or with my friends. When I'm stuttering, I don't like when people finish my sentences or tell me to slow down and try again.

What I have to say is important even if I stutter.

Graham, 6  
 Boulder, CO





# Just Rose and That's Good Enough

by Rose Cordero-Gonzales

As a little girl, I loved to listen to my mamá weave tales of Mexico and other places to entertain my four sisters and me. She displayed a natural way of finding the treasures and lessons of life.

Her tales captured our minds that made us feel rich in our imaginations. Even into her nineties, she never lost her gift. She was an unstoppable force when she put her mind to something. Not a person to be at odds with. She was also the keeper of our family legacy.

At six months, my parents hospitalized me because of pneumonia and bronchitis. When I recovered, the doctor encouraged my parents to institutionalize me. He believed that my illness had caused brain damage.

“Doctor, mi no give my baby away like a tortilla.”

My mamá stood her ground in my defense and refused to listen to the doctor. She packed me up and took me home. My great-grandmother once said this to her because they were so poor when she had my oldest sister that my mother wanted to give up my sister for adoption.

I'm so thankful she listened to my great-grandmother.

Over time, I thrived and met the basic developmental milestones of normal growth. However, when I spoke, I developed a severe stuttering issue. My stuttering contributed to my being extremely shy. I would hide behind my mother to avoid speaking to strangers. Just thinking about talking made my hands sweat, my heart pound, and my throat so tight that I couldn't breathe.

As a second language student, learning to read and write was difficult. My issue was my inability to process information in the nuances of sound differences. High fevers can cause an auditory processing issue later in life. Because of my slow progress, my kindergarten teacher labeled me as a slow learner. I even had to repeat kindergarten for lack of progress, even though I started school before I was five.

Almost every year before high school, I entered a new school. One summer, when I was ten, we became

homeless because my papá got hurt and lost his job. We moved in with my grandmother. To earn money for food, I helped my mamá pick grapes that summer. Later, in the fall, he went back to work, and we moved to a new rental.

Throughout my early education, I attended speech therapy and many remedial classes. I had to learn to spell by memorizing and seeing words as pictures, not letters and sounds.

Progressing through high school, I struggled to maintain a C average grade. One of the most important things I learned because of my stuttering was to observe others. I befriended the smartest students in my classes, who were usually willing to help me with my homework. Overall, I could fit in and socialize despite my stuttering. That doesn't mean my peers didn't tease me. I just learned how to ignore their ignorance with the support of some close friends. I even joined the pep squad my last year as a senior.

During the last week of school, my guidance counselor scheduled a meeting to review my SAT scores.

In her most academic manner, she said, “You don't have the scores or aptitude for college. Instead, you need to focus on more domestic skills like getting a job or getting married.”

She did not know how her words dashed my hope for college and a teaching career. The bleakness of my future shrouded the rest of my day. I felt embarrassed every time my friends asked about my college plans. Finally, I escaped their scrutiny with a simple, curt comment, “I'm still deciding.”

That day melted away slower than a snowball in December.

After school, I wandered home in a daze of disbelief. I trudged the long one-mile walk home in the summer California heat, avoiding my usual walking companions. I entered my backyard gate from the alley and sat under

our old walnut tree. The faded wooden patio chair seemed the perfect place for a loser like me. My black four-footed friend, George The Cat, purred his way into my lap. He rarely allowed me to hold him. He knew I needed a friend.

Again, my Mamá came to my rescue. Our conversation took place in a Spanish and English exchange.

That incident took place over forty years ago. My Mamá's wise words still echo in my memory even today.

"When did you get home?" She said as she joined me, carrying an empty laundry basket on her hip.

"About an hour ago." I wiped the sweat and tears from my face and petted George The Cat.

"What are you doing out here?" She stopped by the clothesline a few steps from me on the dry lawn and pulled a towel off the clothesline wire.

"I didn't pass the college entrance exam. My counselor said to forget about college. I don't have what it takes to be a teacher."

"What?" She dropped her laundry basket to the ground.

"Maybe I'll just start looking for a job." Again, I wiped the tears off of my face. "Or a husband, like that counselor said."

"Mija, don't let that person tell you what you can do." She unpinned a few more clothes and tossed them into the basket. Her eyes focused on me for a moment, suspended in time.

"I guess I'm not—"

"Por favor, don't be like me, waiting for a man to take care of you. A man can come, and a man can go." She pulled another towel off the line and threw it into the basket. "You need an education. A good education belongs to you. No one can take it away. You need to take care of yourself."

I couldn't take my eyes off her. I wiped my face. George The Cat jumped off as I got up to help. "You're right, Mamá." The wrinkles around her black Spanish eyes smiled back at me. Her short, peppered hair shined in the sunlight as we finished the laundry. She never looked so beautiful as that day she gave me back my dreams.

College was a struggle. I enrolled in almost every remedial class at a city college to fill the gaps in my education. I took a wide range of remedial courses to develop my language skills. As for art

and math, they came easily because I could understand abstract concepts visually. Math was easy because once I memorized formulas, they didn't change, unlike the fickleness of the rules of language. Art just absorbed me. There is no wrong way to do art.

Ten years later, I graduated with a degree in Special Education and Speech Therapy because I knew what it was like to be a special education student. One semester, I even made the Dean's List. Along the way, I learned to thrive despite stuttering and other learning issues and became a Special Education teacher and a Resource Specialist.

On my journey, I have trudged through many obstacles like poverty, homelessness, stuttering, and breast cancer. They often appeared insurmountable. Along the way, with the support of others, especially my mamá, I discovered valuable life lessons and found my writer's voice. I like to think I inherited my tenacity for life and learning from her.

In the last five years of my thirty-year career, my destiny finally led me back to my most beloved grade level, the kindergarten classroom. I returned to the place where I had started my journey as a lifelong learner.

Ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be a kindergarten teacher. I finally returned home and enjoyed teaching those little minds with big imaginations. But, in hindsight, the years pass through my hands way too fast. I still wish that I would have spent more time with those wonderful little people whose eyes sparkled with such wonder.

Toward the end of my teaching career, I retired early to take care of my ninety-year-old mamá. It was my time to be there for her. She was too ill to be on her own and required full-time care. Back then, I didn't realize that she would once again change the course of my life.

This was a special time. We had long talks about life, dreams, and regrets during our many hours together. Some discussions were difficult, especially talking about regrets. Life felt so overwhelming that I doubted every action I took and felt stuck. To get some relief, my sisters and I would trade time watching her because I needed time off.

This allowed me to take classes once again to



pursue my passion for writing and art. In pursuing my goals, I discovered my faith and courage by taking a few steps toward becoming a writer. My courage to believe in myself moved me forward.

I have discovered my passion for storytelling and carrying on the family legacy in my writing. I'm thankful for the opportunity that I was there for her those last six months of her life. She passed away on Mother's Day, a month after her ninety-third birthday.

Since then, I have combined my passion for writing and art to create and publish. I have written and illustrated the children's book *Rosie's Christmas Wish* and a series of journal notebooks. Last spring, I shared my story with host Margie Peterson on the podcast *STOMP!* With Debbie Walker. Some of my work is featured in the best-selling book, *The Community Book Project: Celebrating 365 Days of Gratitude* available on Amazon.

A book of poetry and a memoir is in the works. As *Rose CG*, I also share other stories and poems about life on my blog on Medium.com.

My passion is to inspire others to find their own voices so they can share their stories.

Even after all this time, I still consider myself a stutterer because I never know when stuttering will pop back into my life.

The most valuable lesson I have learned along my life's journey is that I am good enough just the way I am.



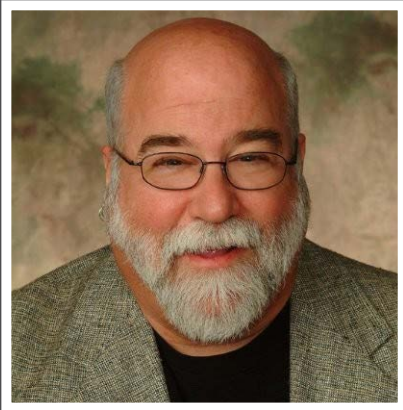
*R.C. Gonzales is a writer, poet, artist, and former teacher. Her life's journey has taken her from working in the grape fields of California to becoming the first in her family to receive a college education. She has a B.A. in Speech Pathology and an M. A. in Special Education.*

# STUTTERING FOUNDATION ASHA 2022

SFA's Madison White and James Hayden are joined by Elaine Kelman from the Michael Palin Centre and Kim Krieger at the annual American Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention in New Orleans.



# THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS HOWARD SCHWARTZ



We, at the Stuttering Foundation, mourn the loss of a dear friend and colleague, Howard (Howie) D. Schwartz, PhD, CCC-SLP, who passed away on April 17, 2023, following a heart attack and ensuing complications.

Howie received his bachelor's at SUNY-New Paltz in speech and hearing sciences. His clinical practice as a speech-language pathologist and master's degree studies at Michigan State University preceded pursuit of a doctorate at Syracuse University under the direction of Edward G. Conture, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-F. His doctoral dissertation was the first to explore subgrouping among children who stutter (Schwartz & Conture, 1988), work he continued in a

study investigating speech and nonspeech behaviors near the onset of stuttering (Schwartz, Zebrowski, & Conture, 1990).

Howie's personal and intellectual gifts were reflected in clinical service provision, student mentoring, teaching, and publication of his text, *A Primer for Stuttering Therapy* (1999), unique in its inclusion of video demonstrations of his abundant skills in coaching, counseling, and individually supporting those who stutter. Former clients, and students, often became friends and sought his counsel long after Howie's retirement.

Those of us who were master's or doctoral students while Howie was at Syracuse University, and the many students he taught and mentored in his 20 years at Northern Illinois University, remember well his clinical acumen, compassionate mentoring, deep friendship, and incredible culinary skills (especially in partnership with his wife, Reggie). Howie's love for and dedication to providing individualized, holistic help to those who stutter and their families, and sharing his gifts of teaching and mentoring students were also imparted at the Institute for Communicative Disorders, a private practice he established in Napierville, IL.

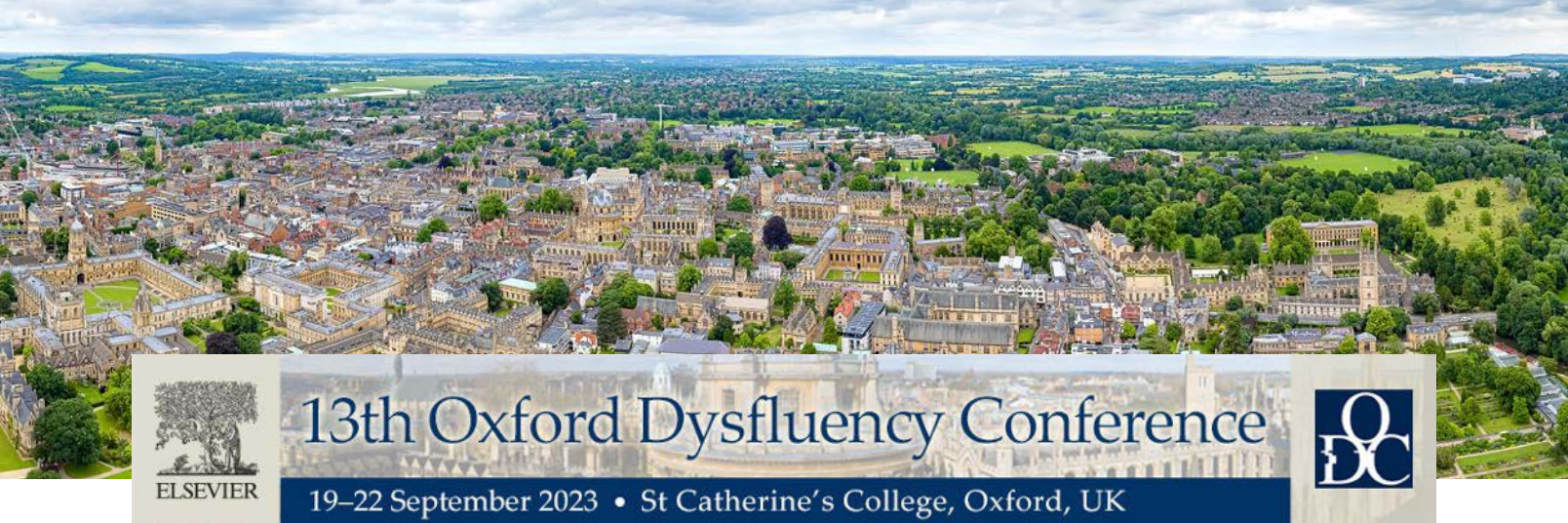
Howie spent his retirement traveling with his wife, Reggie, visiting with his son, Jeff, and daughter, Jenny (including her wedding), deep sea and fly fishing, and keeping in touch with former students, colleagues, and the many friends he made everywhere he went. His legacy remains and will ever enrich our minds and hearts.

*Schwartz, H. D. (1999). A primer for stuttering therapy. Allyn and Bacon.*

*Schwartz, H. D., & Conture, E. G. (1988). Subgrouping young stutterers: Preliminary behavioral observations. Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 31(1), 62-71.*

*Schwartz, H. D., Zebrowski, P. M., & Conture, E. G. (1990). Behaviors at the onset of stuttering. Journal of Fluency Disorders, 15(2), 77-86.*





Conference Chairs, Sharon Millard of the Michael Palin Centre in London, UK and Shelley Brundage of The George Washington University in Washington, DC, USA, along with their scientific committee, are preparing the program for the 13th Oxford Dysfluency Conference to be held 19-22 September 2023 at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, UK.

After gathering for the 12th (7-8 January 2021) conference online, dysfluency researchers and clinicians from around the world are looking forward to meeting in person. This year's event is themed, *Back to the Future*, with featured topics including Conceptualizing Stuttering, Genetics and Neurophysiology, More than Speech, Cluttering and Acquired Stuttering, and Advancing Clinical Practice through Research. In addition to the keynotes, a wide variety of research and clinical oral presentations and posters will feature these topics as attendees support, learn from one another, and further bridge the gap between research and clinical practice.

Keynote speakers include:

Kurt Eggers, Professor, Ghent University and Thomas More, Belgium; Turku University, Finland

Talk topic: Temperament and the relevance and implications for children who stutter

Rodney Gabel, Professor, Binghamton University, State University of New York, USA

Evan George, Co-founder, BRIEF, UK

Talk topic: Making change easier: the Solution-Focused approach

Elaine Kelman, Head and Clinical Lead, The Michael Palin Centre, UK

Bridget Walsh, Associate Professor, Michigan State University

Preliminary talk topic: The development of stuttering and its adverse impact on children

Attendees of previous Oxford Dysfluency conferences find it to be among, if not their favorite conference, because of the collegial atmosphere and opportunities to learn from and network with others who are passionate about advancing our understanding and treatment of dysfluency, and providing meaningful support for those who stammer.

In addition to the presentations, attendees will gather to dine, socialize, and celebrate recipients of several awards including The Dave Rowley Award for International Initiatives, recognizing collaboration in research, clinical and learning initiatives across countries and disciplines, and The Travers Reid Award, highlighting contributions of research to the wellbeing of children and young people who stutter.

The 13th Oxford Dysfluency Conference is being organized by Elsevier, and co-sponsored by The Michael Palin Centre, The George Washington University, The Stuttering Foundation, Action for Stammering Children, and Stuttering Therapy Resources. [Click here for registration information.](#) This is a conference you don't want to miss! See you in Oxford!



*From left: Dan and Tracey with James' paternal grandmother, aunt and cousin; Dan and Tracey*

Tracey Campbell and Dan Foley were married on October 8, 2022, at The Marine Corps Museum in Triangle, VA.

In lieu of gifts Tracey and Dan asked that donations be made to the Stuttering Foundation in memory of Tracey's son, James Michael Campbell. James tragically took his own life at the age of 17 in 2011. James was a person who stutters. In honor of James' life, it is Tracey and Dan's hope to help other teenagers who stutter have meaningful lives.

If you would like to learn more about James and the James Campbell Stuttering Memorial please go to our website, <https://www.stutteringhelp.org/content/james-campbell-stuttering-memorial>.

**Donations in memory of James and in honor of Tracey and Dan were made by:**

*Jan & Nichole Andersson  
Christy Aquilla  
Lanette, Ben,  
Cory & Mark Broderick  
Catherine Brown  
Mike & Sara Burlein  
AnnMarie Clark  
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Cranley  
Susan Crosbie  
Robert & Patty Fink  
Daniel & Imelda Foley  
Foley Mechanical, Inc.  
Marisol Galan  
Kinga & Eric Ulery  
William Genes  
Eric Grennell*

*Bret & Julie Hart  
Bridget Hart  
Devin Hart  
Kelsey Hart  
Sean Hart  
Stassi Hart  
Camryn Hart  
Laura Hart  
Patrick & Kelly Hart  
Erin Hart-Redcher  
David Hersey  
Carolyn & Blake Howard  
Angela Icaza  
Roberta Jurczak  
Ryan & Jessica Lugo  
Don & Teresa McCann*

*John Mesenbrink  
Susan & Lanelle Miller  
Derek & Nicole Moore  
Robert Place  
Jeff Riley  
Jere & Irene Riley  
Izolda Rosenthal  
Peter & Betsy Schauf  
Steve Shannon  
Katherine Shea  
Dr. Maura Shea  
Patrick & Meredith Shea  
Karen Ann Theis  
Chi Tran  
David & Lois Yates*

**These gifts will be used to keep James' memory alive through helping others.**





## 2023: IN MEMORIAM

- Akinola Abolade
- John Acquavella
- Joseph G. Agnello
- Kay Armstead
- Dr. Kelmer Baxter
- David R. Berry, Sr.
- Curt Betebenner
- Marion A. Bishop
- Steve Bitter
- Dennis W. Blager
- Dr. Oliver Bloodstein
- Sister Charleen Bloom
- London Bradley
- Joseph Goodwin Brown
- Muriel Brown
- Dennis Cairns
- Mary Campagna
- James M. Campbell
- Michael Carlberg
- Helen Z. Carr
- Ann Cerf
- David K. Colbert
- Edith Comito
- Dr. Eugene B. Cooper
- Michael and Mary Cristiano
- Sherman N. Crocket, Sr.
- Joan Wichter Crockett
- Richard Curlee
- Paul Czuchna
- Ed D.
- Lina Daltorio
- Mike Dehdari
- Katharyn Elizabeth Fell Demaree
- Dr. William Dopheide
- Tim Douthat
- Marshall Bryan Dunaway
- Major James Duricy
- Carol Ecke
- Dr. Joan Good Erickson
- Edmund A. Evans
- Elizabeth Fauconniere
- Eric Todd Fetsco
- John Flores
- Mom and Dad
- Malcolm Fraser
- James Frick
- Joseph R.G. Fulcher
- Keith Gadbois
- Annie Glenn
- Nick Goodban
- Carolyn Gregory
- Dr. Hugo Gregory
- Ina Hamburger
- Robert Hejna
- James D. Hellwege
- Judy Hellwege
- Tammy Hintz
- Mel Hoffman
- Dr. Stephen B. Hood
- Marilyn K. Johnson
- Arthur Jones
- Arlene Kempe
- Sue Knight
- Robert Kovats
- Dorothy LaTourette
- Barry Liben
- Dr. E. George Linke
- C.L. Lott
- Timothy McGuire
- Timothy Meyer
- Sr. Martha Pappas Mills
- Eleanor Zigan Mou
- Dr. Albert Murphy
- Joseph Murphy
- Dr. Frederick Murray
- Rupert Myers
- Shirley H. O'Brien
- Kathleen C. O'Neill
- Jodi M. Nesi
- Joseph Orzechowski
- Raffaele Parente, Jr.
- William A. Parker, Jr.
- Leon Parkin
- Paul
- William Perkins
- Dr. Theodore Peters
- Jim Peterson
- David S. Phillips
- Philip E. Powell
- Alice Mae Preston
- Marty Prince
- Virginia Puich
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THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS

## DENNIS CAIRNS



Dennis Eugene "Denny" Cairns, 67, of Hutchinson, died December 21, 2022, at Hospice House. He was born April 15, 1955, in Albuquerque, NM, to Clayton L. and Bertha D. (Johannes) Cairns.

Denny graduated from Hutchinson High School in 1973 and received his bachelor's degree and master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Wichita State University. He worked as a speech-language pathologist at Early Education Center for 21 years. Denny was known for his corny jokes, tie-dye t-shirts, and forgetting items in various locations. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Early Education Center or Stuttering Foundation of America.

### GIFTS IN MEMORY OF DENNIS CAIRNS

- Tonya Deal
- Ronda Hedrick
- Holly Lyons
- Amanda Parsons
- Susan Ray
- Jaquetta A. Servis
- Cheryl L. Thompson



STUTTERING FOUNDATION CELEBRITY CORNER

# PETER STRAUB

LITERARY MASTER OF THE SUPERNATURAL

A native of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Peter Straub first began writing as a student at the prestigious Milwaukee Country Day School, and would go on to earn a BA in English at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1965, followed by an MA at Columbia University the following year. Following his studies at Columbia, he and his wife moved to Dublin, Ireland in 1969 where he would pursue a Ph.D and also finally begin to write professionally.

A catalyst to his interest in writing ironically also activated his stuttering. His September 6, 2022 obituary in the New York Times, titled “Peter Straub, Literary Master of the Supernatural, Dies at 79”, stated, “When he was 7 he was hit by a car and nearly killed. He had to learn to walk again, and the experience left him with a pronounced stutter that he overcame but did not entirely vanquish, so that even later in adulthood it crept back whenever he grew excited.” The experience forced the first-grader to spend several months in the hospital, enduring multiple operations.

The obituary article in Entertainment Tonight stated, “Because he had learned prematurely that the world was dangerous, he was jumpy, restless, hugely garrulous in spite of his stutter.”

Over the years, interviews with and articles about Straub frequently mentioned his stuttering. His writings in the horror and supernatural genres put him in the same literary camp as novelists who stutter, such as mystery writer Paul Johnson as well as David Shields.

His first two novels, *Marriages* and *Under Venus*, published in the early 1970’s, were mainstream novels that did not fare well. IN 1975, his first attempt at the supernatural was *Julia*, which put Straub on the map as a novelist. It was made into the 1977 film *The Haunting of Julia* starring Mia Farrow.



*Peter Straub, the famous American novelist who specialized in the genres of horror and supernatural fiction . Straub, who lived in Brooklyn with his wife, died on September 4, 2022 at age 79.*



Julia was followed by the 1977 novel *If You Could See Me Now*, but it was in 1979 with his fifth novel, *Ghost Story*, that he was catapulted to fame. *Ghost Story* was made into a 1981 movie of the same title starring Fred Astaire, Melvyn Douglas, and John Houseman.

The *New York Times* obituary commented, “Mr. Straub was both a master of his genre and an anxious occupant of it. Novels like *Julia* (1975) and *Ghost Story* (1979) helped revivify a once-creaking field, even though he insisted that his work transcended categorization and that he wrote how he wanted, only to watch readers and critics pigeonhole him as a horror novelist.”

Straub was friendly with author Stephen King, and asked him to write a blurb for *Ghost Story*, after King read a galley copy of the book. King became enthralled with Straub’s work. “We got it at the post office,” King recalled. “It was all kind of split open. And so I was driving and my wife opened it and she started to read it to me. And by the time we got back to our house, we were both really excited, because we knew that this was sort of a masterwork.”

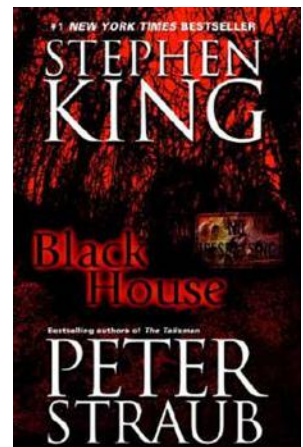
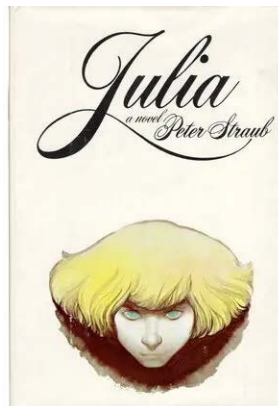
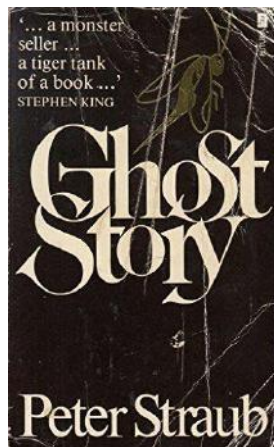
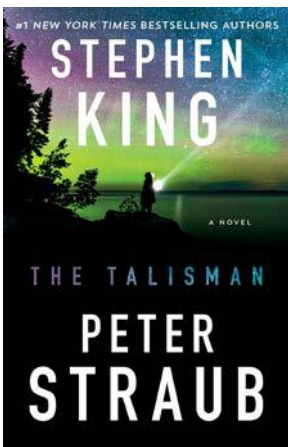
It was only a couple of years later that Straub suggested to his friend Stephen King that they collaborate on writing a novel. King immediately agreed. The two worked



Stephen King with Peter Straub

together using then state-of-the-art technology, which consisted of computer-linked modems and dot matrix printers. King later said of this collaboration, “He was a better and more literary writer than I was.”

The result of the King-Straub partnership was the wildly successful 1984 novel *The Talisman*. The November 8, 1984 review by Christopher Lehman-Haupt in the *New York Times* Book Review began, “What happens when you cross a Stephen King with a Peter Straub? You get talking sea gulls and great balls of nuclear fire that go rolling around the desert like



Continued on p. 47

so much radioactive tumbleweed. You get friendly slobbering werewolves and not so friendly ones. You get voices that come out of telephones that sound like cracked, rasping croak of something long dead, some creature which could be seen like the living: the sight of it would drive a living person insane, or strike him dead with frost-etchings on his lips and staring eyes blinded by cataracts of ice.”

What followed were many other successful novels that landed on bestseller lists such as *Koko*, *Mystery*, *The Throat*, *The Hellfire Club*, and *Lost Boy*, *Lost Girl*. In 2001, Straub once again teamed up with Stephen King to write bestseller *The Black House*, which was a partial sequel to *The Talisman*.

In an interview following Straub’s death, Stephen King said about his friend, “He was a unique writer in a lot of ways. He was not only a literary writer with a poetic sensibility, but he was readable. And that was a fantastic thing. He was a modern writer, who was the equal of say, Phillip Roth, though he wrote about fantastic things. He brought a poet’s sensibility to the field, creating a synthesis of horror and beauty.”

Peter Straub is survived by his wife Susan Bitker, whom he wed in 1966, as well as their children Benjamin and Emma, who has followed in her father’s footsteps as a novelist. He joins a distinguished list of writers who have struggled with stuttering.



## 2023 GIFTS IN HONOR

### 俊哲

Jameson Acuff  
William T. Adkins  
Ahmed  
Alicia from the park  
All my friends who stutter  
All my students who stuttered  
All SLPs—my heroes  
All Those Who Stutter  
Julio Amaya  
Teresa Amaya  
Edgar Arroyave  
Kenta Asars  
Finn Balan  
John Banister  
Charles Beck  
Dominique Bell  
Julia Bencko  
President Joe Biden  
Holly Bishop  
Nicholas Boody  
Guy Bradshaw  
David Briggs  
Brilliant, brave kids and parents  
Barbara M. Brown  
Little Miss Shirah Bryant  
Bert Burd  
Susan Hamilton Burleigh  
Mara Calvello  
Capistrano Unified SD  
SLPs and SLPAs  
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Rachel and Kai  
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Joaquin Herrera  
Michael Herrington

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Isabelle  
Connor Jackson  
Diane James  
Chaitanya Jayanti  
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'Junzhe'  
Saravanan Kaliyaperumal  
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Terrence L. Murgallis II  
Dawn Murray  
My past students  
My son  
My wonderful grandchildren  
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Noble  
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**Stuttering hurts.  
We can help.  
So can you.**



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Make a difference.  
Donate today.





THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION  
REMEMBERS  
**DAVID COLBERT**



David Kyle Colbert, 47, of Shepherdstown, WV passed away at his home on January 2nd, 2023. He was a devoted husband, father, son, brother, coach, and friend to so many. David was a law enforcement officer, a Speech-Language Pathologist and a person who stutters. He was devoted to making his community a better place. Memorial gifts made to the Stuttering Foundation in David's name were received from:

**16 YEARS: SFA  
& MICHAEL PALIN CENTRE**

The MPC team had a wonderful meeting with Jane Fraser of @stutteringfdn and Sam Lister of @W\_H\_Charity, hearing the Stuttering Foundation story and celebrating our 16 year partnership.

- Catherine Baker
- Kayla, Evan, Isabel and Henry Boggess
- Richard H. Brown
- Monica Grabowska
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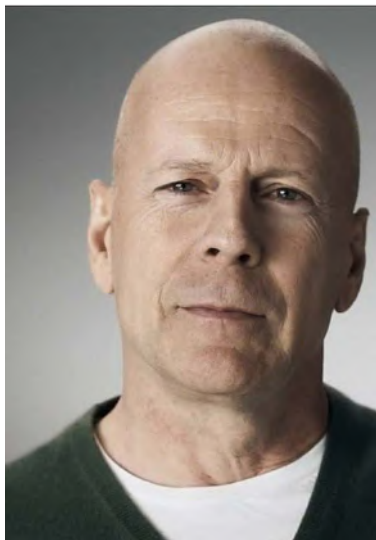
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Karen Donnelly Von Amelunxen

Arthur Wiener



"I thought I was  
handicapped. I couldn't talk  
at all. I still stutter around  
some people now."  
- Bruce Willis



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MAY 8-14, 2023

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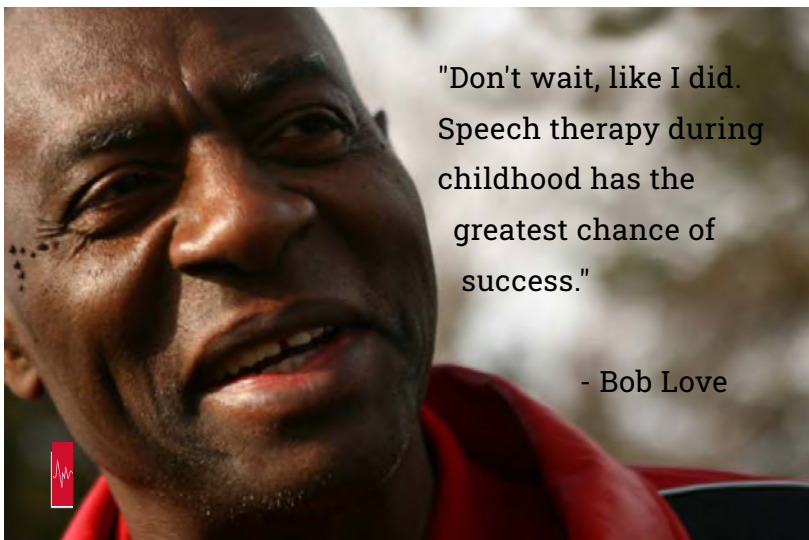
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childhood has the  
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success."**

**- Bob Love**




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