

STEVE ACKLEY FUND NEWS

Newsletter from Friends of Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Fund

June 2020

Bryn Griswold and Talah Wafa received the Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Award

Bryn Griswold, a rising 3rd year AuD student at Gallaudet University, and Talah Wafa, a recently PhD graduate, were named this year's recipients of the Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Award during Gallaudet University Hearing, Speech, and Language Sciences (HSLs) Department Awards Gathering, held in a Zoom meeting format, on May 5, 2020. This is the fifth year in which this award was given.

Selection was made by the members of the Gallaudet HSLs Department, after careful evaluation and discussion of Steve's legacy and character. HSLs faculty and clinical educators considered several students who exemplify Steve's character, and ultimately supported both Ms. Griswold's and Dr. Wafa's nominations.

The Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2014 by the Faculty of HSLs Department. With outpouring support and donations from numerous family, friends, former students and colleagues, the Fund raised over \$25,000 in just one year to be fully endowed in Fall 2015, and it continues to grow.



Dr. Steve Ackley was a beloved friend, colleague, and mentor to many. Within HSLs and Gallaudet, Dr. Ackley served in numerous roles, including Audiology Program Director, Department Chair, Faculty Senate representative, and student organization advisor. His teaching and mentoring was

student-centered, focused on life-long learning and humanitarian ideals. With a natural ability to connect with those around him, he often acted as a motivator for other's research and professional development. He is fondly remembered for his warmth, humor, devotion to his family and to his students, and commitment to audiology and deaf education.

Tax-deductible donation can be made at: www.gallaudet.edu/office-of-development/steven-ackley-memorial-scholarship-fund.

Bryn Griswold

My name is Bryn Griswold and I am a rising third-year Audiology student from Denver, Colorado. Coming to Gallaudet University was one of the best choices I could have made for my future as an audiologist. My time at Gallaudet has been unparalleled - not only have I had the opportunity to learn a new language and immerse myself in a new culture, but I have also completed valuable off-campus clinical rotations.



I have had the pleasure of completing internships located in the Bering Strait Region in rural Alaska, Baltimore, and the District of Colombia. Each clinical rotation has helped me gain confidence working with culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse populations. Additionally, during my time at Gallaudet I have become increasingly passionate about research and I have had the added

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Talah Wafa

I'm Talah Wafa and am graduating from Gallaudet with my PhD. I met Dr. Ackley on the 1st day I went to visit Gallaudet before the semester started. He was actually the 1st HSLs faculty member I met.



After a short conversation I knew Gallaudet was the right school for me. His warm smile and contagious laugh was so welcoming. Later that year he took our class to the NIDCD's 20th anniversary symposium. Our discussions on all the amazing research going on encouraged me to apply to the NIDCD for a research internship. His stories about his animal work always fascinated me. Fast forward, I'm now a postdoctoral fellow at NIDCD working with humans and mice investigating balance and postural stability.

I got my bachelors degree in speech and hearing rehabilitation from Kind Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. I grew up in Washington, D.C. and came back to get my Au.D. and Ph.D. from Gallaudet. I completed my extrenship at the VA medical center in Washington, D.C. My clinical interest and research focus on postural stability and ways to improve assessment. I

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Bryn Griswold (continuing from page 1)

pleasure of working outside of the audiology department. I have experience working as a co-teacher with the Peer Mentor Certificate Program, as well as a research assistant for the Numeracy and Educational Neuroscience Laboratory. I do not take my educational and clinical experiences for granted and I am grateful for every step of this path to becoming an audiologist.

I am immensely honored to have received the Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Award and I hope to continue his legacy of life-long learning and humanitarian ideals throughout my career.

Talah Wafa (continuing from page 1)

also study the vestibular system in mice and have worked on collaboration projects ranging from blast exposure to gene therapy. I have been fortunate to present my work at the American Academy of Audiology, the American Balance Society and the National Institutes of Health. My passion for balance goes beyond the clinic. While working on my dissertation, I completed my yoga teacher training and now teach community yoga classes with a focus on improving balance in the DC area. Another passion of mine is photography, especially when I travel with my husband and two kids.

Steve Ackley Memorial Scholarship Fund

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These contributions were made after the fund was endowed. They help grow the fund!

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May 2018-April 2019

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These contributions were made prior to April 2016. They helped establish the endowment fund!

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The Stars of the Steve Ackley Legacy Conference

These contributions were made to make the Ackley Legacy Conference in 2014 a success. Individuals here gifted their talent as presenters, or provided travel and lodging support to the presenters. These contributions helped to deposit more funds into the scholarship fund.

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Tax-deductible donation to the scholarship fund is appreciated at: <https://www.gallaudet.edu/office-of-development/steven-ackley-memorial-scholarship-fund>.