



Sacred Heart University

From the Selected Works of Ciara Leydon

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SHU Speech Program Receives Grant from Parkinson Voice Project



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Funds and training will prepare students and faculty to help patients with Parkinson's 'SPEAK OUT!'

Sacred Heart University's [communication disorders](#) department has received a grant from the [Parkinson Voice Project](#) <https://www.parkinsonvoiceproject.org/> to train students in its SPEAK OUT! & LOUD Crowd programs that help patients with Parkinson's improve their communication skills.

Grant recipients—which also include hospitals, private practices and nonprofit organizations—receive free training and funding for speech therapy supplies.

The Parkinson Voice Project is a nonprofit organization that strives to preserve speech and communication skills in patients with Parkinson's disease and related neurological disorders using speech therapy, follow-up support, research, education and community awareness.

The organization developed the SPEAK OUT! & LOUD Crowd programs, combining education, individual speech therapy and ongoing group sessions to achieve its goals. Department chair [Ciara Leydon](#) and more than 60 graduate students in SHU's [speech-language pathology program](#) will be trained to use the programs.

"The SPEAK OUT! & LOUD Crowd grant awarded by the Parkinson Voice Project enables the expansion of clinical services we offer to the community," said [Cristina Pino](#), co-director of clinical education. "Our graduate-student clinicians complete the training needed to deliver this evidence-based treatment approach to their clients and experience the fulfillment that comes with supporting improved communication skills for clients with Parkinson's disease. It's exciting for all to see the positive impact of this program."

Training in SPEAK OUT! & LOUD Crowd is expected to finish in February. Students will use their new skills to work patients with Parkinson's at SHU's on-campus speech and language clinic, a faculty- and student-run rehabilitation clinic. The facility offers services and treatment programs at no

cost to adults who have experienced neurological disorders, such as strokes, Parkinson's disease and traumatic brain injuries.

To learn more, visit the [speech-language pathology program webpage](#).

Photo caption: Students Sofia Iacono, right, and Ariana Koroglu work with a client as part of the SPEAK OUT! program at the Center for Healthcare Education. (photo not available)