



THE CENTER FOR HEARING AND SPEECH

EXPERTS IN HEARING LOSS



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear Friends of The Center for Hearing and Speech,

Thank you for generously giving the gift of sound and a brighter future to children with hearing loss.

I am writing this letter from the unusual vantage point of looking back with gratitude on last year's accomplishments, responding to COVID-19, and focused on building our future.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has been disruptive for us all, it was crucial for our services to continue because a 3-month delay for a child with hearing loss can significantly impact their development. For that reason, I am immensely proud of our staff for quickly developing and implementing virtual, no-contact, and limited contact services with safety as a top priority. Today all speech therapy sessions are conducted virtually, Melinda Webb School students learn through a virtual classroom experience, hearing aid fittings are provided virtually, mapping cochlear implants is done with limited contact, and families schedule pick up/drop off services for equipment.

During 2019, the depth and breadth of our programs expanded as we served more children and our geographic footprint grew larger. Record enrollment in our Melinda Webb School, more access to speech therapy through tele health, and an increase in the number of audiology clients served are all indicators how we grew in size and scope to meet the needs of the children and families we serve.

Together with you, we are laying the groundwork for the future. We are excited and humbled to have reached the \$22.5M goal for the Campaigns for Our Future. This fall we will begin a new and exciting chapter in our storied history when we move into our new building in the Texas Medical Center where Texas Children's Hospital® will co-locate ENT physicians. This partnership will streamline services for families, optimize outcomes for children, and increase the number of children we serve.

We are honored to be your partners in helping children with hearing loss reach their full potential through advanced, family-centered healthcare and specialized education. The combination of our talented, expert staff, with a state of the art facility and your meaningful support is a recipe for a very bright future indeed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Swift', written over a faint circular stamp.

Kyle Swift
Chief Executive Officer

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MISSION/VISION

Our Mission - To enable children with hearing loss reach their full potential by teaching them listening, speaking and literacy skills.

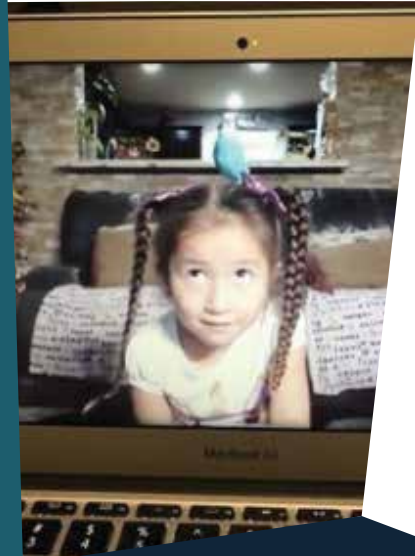
Our Vision - All children with hearing loss will be identified early, families will have access to medical and educational resources, and professionals will provide a supportive, learning environment where self-reliance through spoken language is achieved.



COVID-19 UPDATE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our dedicated educators, clinicians, and administrative staff enthusiastically rose to the challenge of meeting the needs of our students, patients, and families by creating and providing the following services:

- The Melinda Webb School Virtual Classroom Environment
 - Teachers developed a completely new curriculum with minimal resources, delivered the virtual educational tools to students' homes, and organized interactive virtual play dates
- The Speech Clinic immediately pivoted to conducting all speech therapy sessions via tele health
- The Audiology Clinic rolled out:
 - Virtual Hearing Aid Fitting Program
 - Curbside drop off and pick up for hearing aid repairs
 - Troubleshooting cochlear implants with parents on video platforms
 - Minimal Contact ABR Testing
 - No-Contact Cochlear Implant Mapping Program
- Created instructional videos and documents in English and Spanish. Examples include: Troubleshooting Guide for hearing aids and cochlear implants, and Making Custom Ear Molds
- A designated staff member helps low income families acquire resources (computers and internet to access virtual classrooms and tele health, and basic needs like diapers and food)
- CHS Buddies (peer group for teens with hearing loss) online get-togethers



TESTIMONIALS FROM OUR PARENTS

“Our journey at CHS began with a beautiful angel who worked tremendously hard to help find an insurance company that covered Audiology services. The Audiology team has been supportive ever since. The Audiology team feels like a part of our family.” – Adela Munoz

“It was Ms. LeBlanc’s tone of complete sincerity that gave me hope for my daughter’s future. By the end of the day, Ms. LeBlanc had contacted my daughter’s school district coordinator, requesting an evaluation, as well as attaching my daughter’s recent test results. Throughout the process, Ms. LeBlanc has stayed consistent in her communication with me, eager to help and encourage me when I would procrastinate at not knowing how to respond to the “hard” questions.” – Lindsey Lewellyn

“Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Hearing and Speech and Melinda Webb School have continued to provide uninterrupted services through innovative use of technology for our daughter Victoria’s academics, school activities as well language and twice weekly speech therapy. Our daughter underwent a second cochlear implant surgery at the onset of social distancing. The Center has implemented strict infection control measures that will now allow our daughter’s cochlear implant activation and we could not be more grateful for the gift of sound access, particularly in this challenging time!

Thank you to all the Center for Hearing and Speech professionals and Melinda Webb School teachers for their extraordinary dedication to provide families like ours with support and resources amidst the unfamiliar.” – The Padillas (Fernando and Maria, parents of Victoria)

“I was so surprised by all the new sounds Gabriel was able to hear after his hearing aid fitting! He said he was able to hear the car turn on, the birds singing, and his twin brother talking. We cannot thank the Audiology Department enough for helping him hear!” – Gabriel’s Mother

“Thank you for helping my brother hear me!” – Gabriel’s Twin



FINANCIAL SERVICES



**2018-2019
FUNDING SOURCES**

Contributions	\$690,839.11	19.11%
Special Events	\$831,027.57	22.99%
Endowment	\$325,000.00	8.99%
United Way	\$443,108.66	12.26%
Earned Income	\$1,314,746.14	36.37%
Miscellaneous Income	\$9,903.51	0.27%
	<u>\$3,614,624.99</u>	<u>100.00%</u>



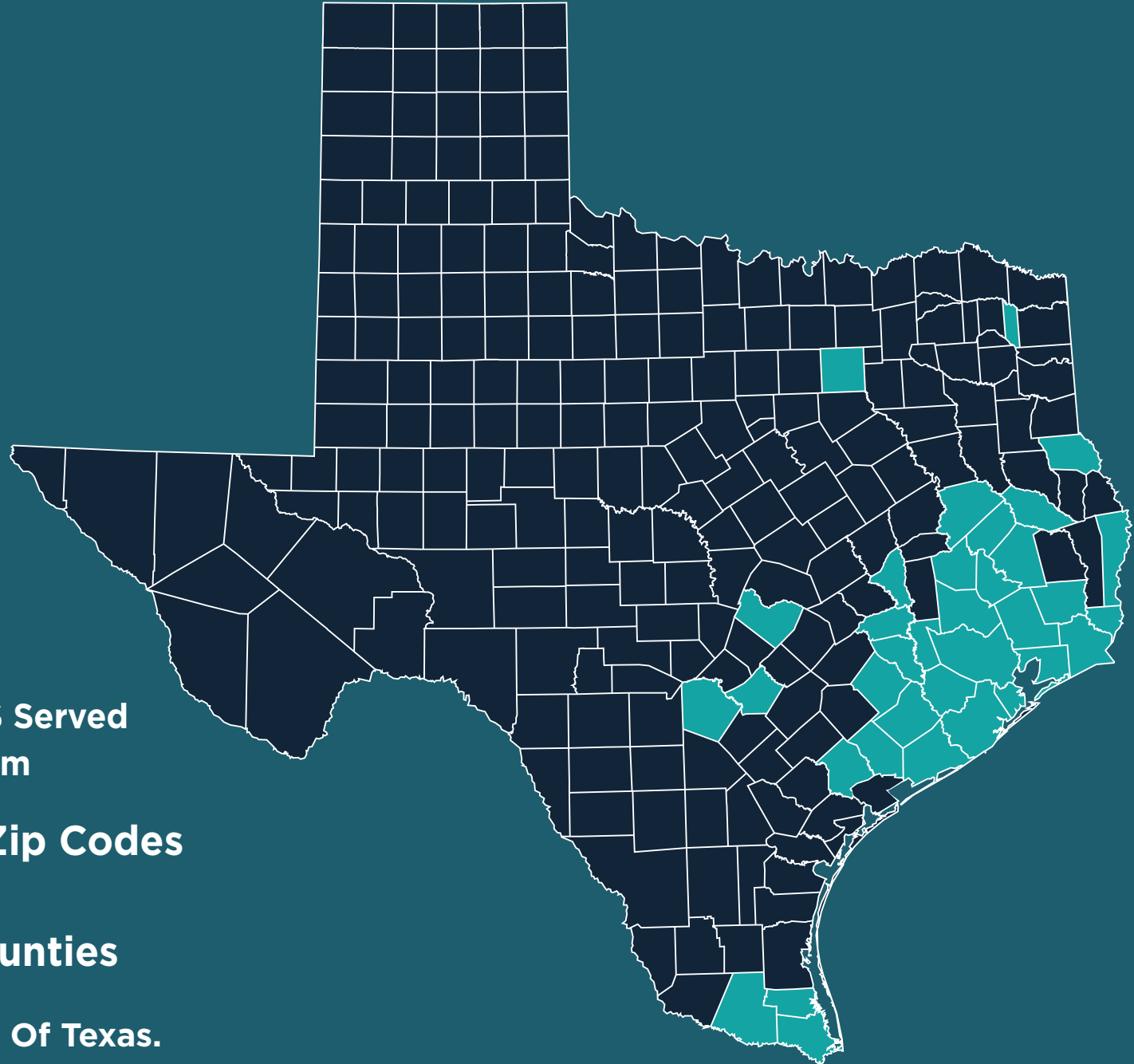
**2018-2019
OPERATING EXPENSES**

Education and Daycare	\$891,777.66	27.89%
Social Worker	\$53,111.39	1.66%
Speech Pathology	\$660,849.22	20.67%
Audiology	\$1,198,612.67	37.49%
Community Relations	\$63,587.48	1.99%
Management and General	\$501,813.44	15.70%
Development	\$440,350.49	13.77%
Special Events	\$278,869.36	8.72%
	<u>\$3,197,194.05</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

PHILANTHROPY

Philanthropic support allows The Center for Hearing and Speech to serve every child who comes to us, regardless of their family's ability to pay. The nationally renowned facility is the most comprehensive resource for pediatric hearing loss in Texas and the only facility in the region that offers health services, spoken language education for children with hearing loss, and family support services under one roof.

In 2019 CHS Served
Children from
251 Zip Codes
35 Counties
In The State Of Texas.





AUDIOLOGY CLINIC

A team of highly specialized audiologists provide audiology, hearing aid and cochlear implant services for children from infancy to age 21.

PROGRAMS

- **Early Identification and Amplification** - The first three years of a child's life are critical for developing a cognitive and linguistic foundation from which all further development unfolds. The Center's Audiology Clinic provides thorough diagnostic services and develops amplification plans that include hearing aids or cochlear implants.
- **Hearing Screenings** - Conducting hearing screenings at birth is now mandatory, however many children acquire hearing loss later in their childhood. CHS provides free hearing screenings to children through partnerships with Title I schools.
- **Hearing Loss Prevention** - CHS is the only organization educating children and youth throughout the region about preventing hearing loss caused by exposure to loud sounds.

In 2019 the Audiology Clinic provided:

On-site services to **2,394** pediatric patients. Free off-site hearing screenings to **6,648** children. Free off-site hearing loss prevention presentations to **4,096** students.

1 of only 2
Pediatric Cochlear Implant Programs in Houston.



Jennifer Wickesberg-Summers AuD, CCC-A,
LSLS Cert. AVT, CH-AP
Director of Audiology

Dr. Wickesberg-Summers joined CHS as Director of Audiology 15 years ago, where she established and developed the cochlear implant, auditory brainstem response (ABR), and AuD Externship programs.

Upon receiving a Bachelor of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from Oklahoma State University, Master of Science in Audiology from the University of North Texas, and Doctorate in Audiology from the University of Florida, Dr. Wickesberg-Summers began her career at Ear Medical Group in San Antonio, Texas. There, she specialized in intraoperative monitoring of neural pathways during skull base and spinal cord procedures, and worked with both pediatric and adult cochlear implant recipients. She then pursued a career in Auditory-Verbal Therapy, and now combines her cochlear implant and spoken language expertise to achieve the best possible outcomes for children identified hearing loss.

Dr. Wickesberg-Summers is certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, is a fellow and a Certificate Holder - Audiology Preceptor by the American Academy of Audiology, as well as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist Certified Auditory-Verbal Therapist by the AG Bell Academy. She is a member of the Texas Academy of Audiology, the Academy of Doctors of Audiology, and the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing-Association. As an expert in her field, Dr. Wickesberg-Summers shares her expertise throughout the US and internationally, and continues to devise new methodologies for treating pediatric patients with hearing loss; most recently in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Amy Cantu – M.A., CCC-SLP, LSLs Cert. AVT
Director of Speech

Amy is a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist and certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialist. She is the Director of Speech Therapy Services at The Center for Hearing and Speech where she specializes in the assessment and treatment of pediatric hearing loss. She has mentored undergraduate and graduate students and professionals in the development of spoken language in children with hearing loss. She has presented at both the state and national level and previously partnered with the University of Houston to research bilingual language development in children with hearing loss.

SPEECH THERAPY CLINIC

The Speech Therapy Clinic offers specialized speech and language services for children with hearing loss from birth to 21 years of age. Therapists work with families to develop and implement individualized plans of care to ensure children reach their fullest potential in listening and spoken language.

PROGRAMS

- **Auditory-Verbal Speech Therapy** – Parents are included in each session because parent participation is vital to achieving optimal outcomes.
- **Tele-T.A.L.K** – Statewide tele-therapy program for families who are unable to drive to the clinic for speech therapy.
- **RiteCare Infant Program** – Speech therapy for infants at no cost to families
- **Special Programs:**
 - **CHS Buddies** – Peer support for preteens and teens.
 - **Project Lead** – Program that educates preteens and teens with hearing loss about leadership, mentoring, networking and community service.
 - **Project T.A.L.K.!** – Week-long summer camp for children from 4 through 10 years of age.
 - **Jump Start to Listening** – Free education for parents of newly diagnosed children about communication and intervention options.

In 2019 the Speech Clinic provided:

4,716 intensive

Auditory-Verbal therapy

sessions to **332** children





Lindy Powell – M.Ed, LSLS Cert. AVEd
Director of Education at The Melinda Webb School

Lindy has a Bachelor's degree in Deaf Education and Special Education from Ball State University, and a Master's in Education in Reading from The University of St. Thomas Houston. She holds Texas teaching certificates in English as a Second Language, Deaf Education EE-12, and as a Reading Specialist. Lindy has over 12 years of experience in education, working with children birth through high school. She is a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, Certified Auditory-Verbal Educator. She has presented nationally on the topics of early childhood educational programming, the benefits of inclusive settings for children with hearing loss, literacy development, and differentiated instruction. She serves as adjunct faculty for The UT Health Science Center San Antonio's program in Deaf Education and Hearing Sciences where she supervises master's-level students at various practicum placements. Lindy is the board Secretary for OPTION, an international coalition of listening and spoken language-focused early intervention programs, and is leading the OPTION's Teacher Shortage Task Force.

THE MELINDA WEBB SCHOOL

A unique resource in Houston that teaches deaf and hard of hearing children 18 months to 6 years old to listen and speak. Students receive individualized instruction that accelerates their development of spoken language and prepares them to enter local mainstream public or private schools by first grade.

PROGRAMS

- **Full-day and part-time programs** – Focus on listening, spoken language and academics.
- **Journey Transition Program** – Prepares students and families for enrollment in a public or private school.
- **Tutoring** – After school and during the summer.
- **LEAP** – Language **E**nrichment **A**uditory-Verbal **P**rogram supports parents of toddlers with hearing loss.
- **Library** – With onsite librarian.

In 2019 the Melinda Webb School

Educated **70** students
in classes and with tutoring



EDUCATIONAL LIAISON

The Educational Liaison works with children with hearing loss and their families by building and maintaining positive relationships with educators and other professionals to ensure positive educational outcomes.

The support services include:

- Providing community outreach education on a variety of topics related to hearing loss.
- Educating parents and professionals about hearing loss, technology, troubleshooting tips and the impact of hearing loss in the classroom.
- Ongoing support for mainstream teachers throughout the school year.
- Guiding and supporting families during the FIE, ARD and 504 process.
- Assisting parents with finding the correct classroom/school placement for their child's needs.

FAMILY SERVICES

A licensed social worker provides therapeutic support, connects parents to services, and empowers them to overcome challenges.



In 2019 the
Educational Liaison

Served **218** clients
by advocating for them
in schools

THE CAMPAIGN FOR OUR FUTURE

Recognizing that the Center had reached capacity in an aging building and could no longer meet the needs of the community, the Board of Directors formed a Visioning Committee in 2017 to determine the best course of action. Visioning work began with more than 60 interviews of parents, staff, cochlear implant surgeons, otolaryngologists, deaf educators, and other professionals in the field, including those at speech and hearing centers and oral-deaf schools in other parts of the country. Information gleaned from those interviews informed the Center's decision-making.

Over the past three years, the Center:

- Sold its property on West Dallas.
- Relocated to an interim facility.
- Joined the Texas Medical Center.
- Secured a 50-year ground lease for an easily accessible four-acre site in the Texas Medical Center.
- Started construction on a 42,000-square-foot facility.
- Began working on an affiliation with Texas Children's Hospital to expand the Center's reach and provide more comprehensive and seamless services.
- Launched a \$22,550,000 capital campaign to fund the overall project.



April 2020 Construction Progress

The Center for Hearing and Speech has now achieved its capital campaign goal, which included funds to support program expansion. The completion date for the new building is set for fall 2020. As our CEO Kyle Swift said, “It’s really exciting that we will finally have a facility that starts to match the passion and expertise that we have within our walls.”

“ It’s really exciting that we will finally have a facility that starts to match the passion and expertise that we have within our walls. ”

DONORS

THANK YOU! IT TAKES A VILLAGE.

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