



Children's Hospital Colorado

Talking With Technology Camp

A Collaboration with Children's Hospital Colorado and UNC Speech-Language Pathology Graduate Students

Tina Farrell MA,CCC-SLP, Caroline Woeber MA,CCC-SLP

Graduate Students: Jessica Balli, Alison Bergh, Carly Bolyard, Sarah Bookout, Hannah Breckinridge, Emily Fiola, Alyssa Hehemann, Gina Matranga,, Jessica O'Brian, Emily Rutherford, Alexa Steckelberg



Easterseals Camp Rocky Mountain Village, Empire CO



Community Partnership

The University of Northern Colorado ASLS Department and the Children's Hospital Colorado is grateful for support from the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado. Without their financial support, graduate students would not be able to afford to attend this week long camp.



The UNC ASLS program's vision is to be a leader in education, community outreach, and scholarly activities related to improving the lives of individuals served by speech-language pathologists and audiologists.



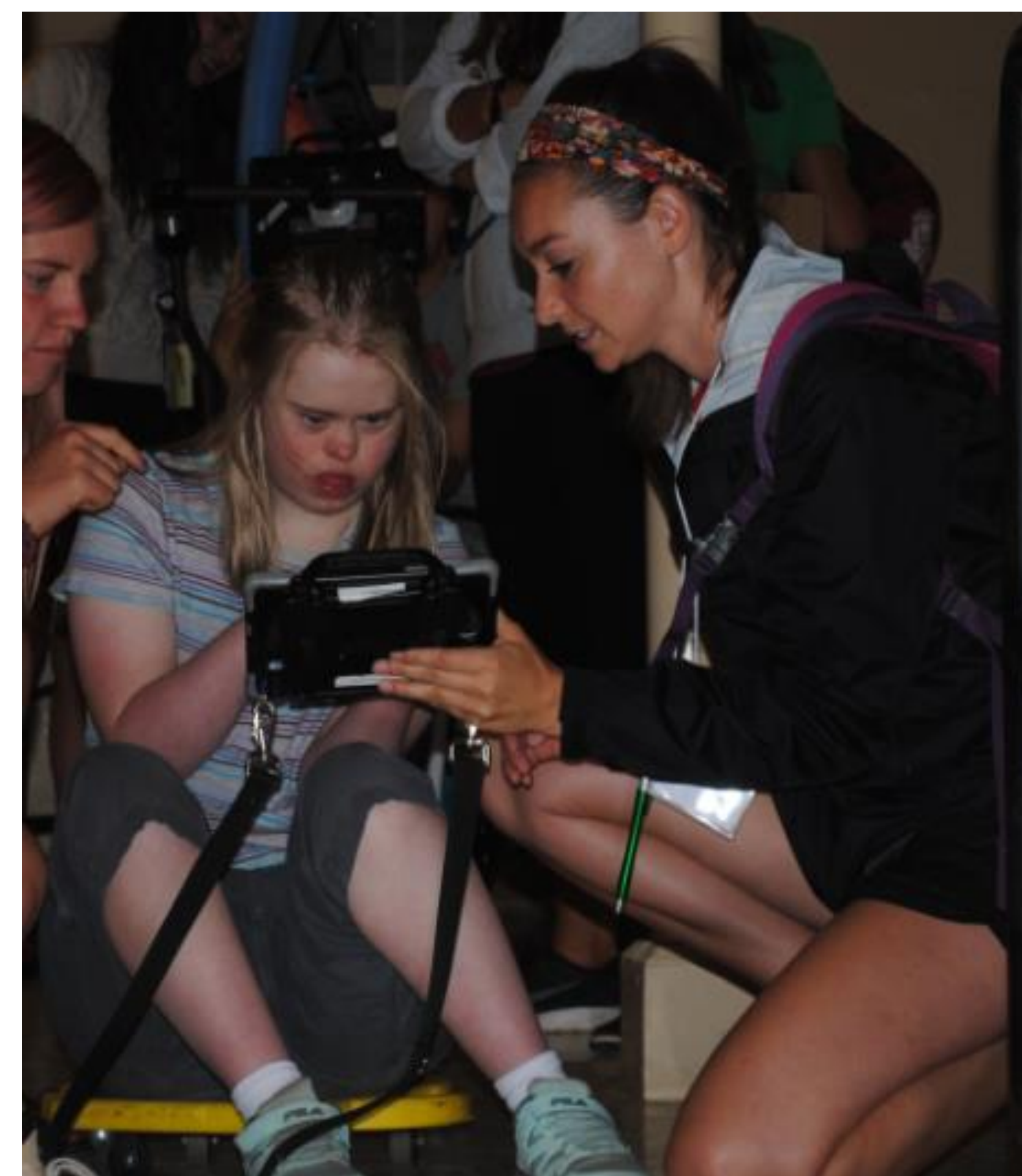
The mission of the Scottish Rite Foundation of Colorado is to enhance the quality of life for Colorado's children and their families by supporting high quality, collaborative programs for the prevention and treatment of childhood language disorders.



For a child's sake... We are a caring community called to honor the sacred trust of our patients, families and each other through humble expertise, generous service and boundless creativity. ...This is the moment.

Talking With Technology Camp

Talking With Technology Camp (TWT) is a weeklong program developed by Children's Hospital Colorado for young people who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems. Children's Hospital Colorado contracts with Easterseals Colorado for this week to be held each summer at it's camp facility, Rocky Mountain Village, in Empire, Colorado.



For children who experience so many barriers to expressing themselves, this camp provides the opportunity to develop greater communication skills while experiencing the beauty of nature. They have the opportunity to meet others who communicate in a similar way that they do – and to have their communication accepted – without judgement.

Student Learning Opportunities: The learning topics discussed by the Children's Hospital Colorado staff were engaging, thoughtful and encompassed a wide range of learning objectives that are necessary when working with individuals who use augmentative-alternative communication.



Student Perspective

Thoughts from the graduate students that had the opportunity to participate in Talking With Technology (TWT) Camp:

- ❖ TWT camp provided the opportunity to learn from experts in the field about strategies to facilitate the use of AAC in a natural environment;
- ❖ The wide range of ages and communication/physical abilities allowed us to experience a wide variety of AAC devices and to learn about their layout and programming;
- ❖ It provided a great hands-on experience working with children that have complex needs and unique forms of communication. This experience reached beyond the typical university clinic setting and challenged us to develop functional goals and embed strategies within every day camp activities to maximize a child's participation;
- ❖ It was incredible to see so many children all using AAC devices- motivating each other to effectively communicate through them. This communication went far beyond basic wants and needs. We saw children share information about each other, comment about their friends and the environment and learn new functions of their device;
- ❖ We learned how to program devices using different software programs and learned so many strategies for using these devices during all different communication tasks;
- ❖ It was exciting to watch our campers grow throughout the week. My camper specifically moved beyond automatic requests that she had memorized to intentionally requesting things she actually wanted as well as making comments about activities;
- ❖ My camper was pretty disinterested in her device but once she saw another girl use her device to talk about herself, she immediately grabbed her device to talk about her pets. The interaction lit up both the girl's faces and it was touching to see how this "simple" conversation was the result of years of trials and treatment. It reminded me just how important an SLP's role is in facilitating these meaningful interactions
- ❖ TWT Camp taught us about collaboration and our roles within a team setting.

