



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

DR. SUNJUNG THAO, SEUNGYEON LEE, STEPAHNIE WHITE, SHARON ROSS, CAMILLE BANKSTON, RANDI SCARBROUGH, ISABEL CHAIDEZ | UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS

BRIDGING HEALTH PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS, CLIENTS, AND COMMUNITIES: CO-DEVELOPING FAMILY ADVOCACY PLANS

ABSTRACT:

Speech-language pathology students often have limited opportunities to directly collaborate with caregivers of individuals with disabilities. A family-centered approach underscores the importance of viewing clients within the broader context of their families. In this project, speech pathology students partnered with caregivers of children, adolescents, and adults to listen to their concerns and co-develop personalized advocacy plans. Pre/post survey data and reflections revealed significant gains in students' familiarity, confidence, and knowledge of advocacy, alongside strengthened family and community partnerships and high caregiver satisfaction and empowerment.

THEMATIC FOCUS:

Blockage and Clearance: Physical, infrastructural, financial, or organizational barriers or portals to community engagement.

Floods and Droughts: Too much of one thing, not enough of another. How complimentary partnership can fill the gaps.

Gauging the Waters: Using research and assessment to course correct or gain deeper insight.

BIO:

Sunjung Kim Thao, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor at the University of Central Arkansas specializing in language, reading, and cognition in language-based learning disabilities. Her research explores technology in assessment and intervention for individuals with language-learning challenges. At the UCA clinic, she engages in literacy assessment, diagnostics, and intervention, while leading the eyeRead Lab on reading and learning research. As a service-learning faculty liaison, she supports faculty with training in best practices and promotes the value of service-learning for faculty, students, and community partnerships.