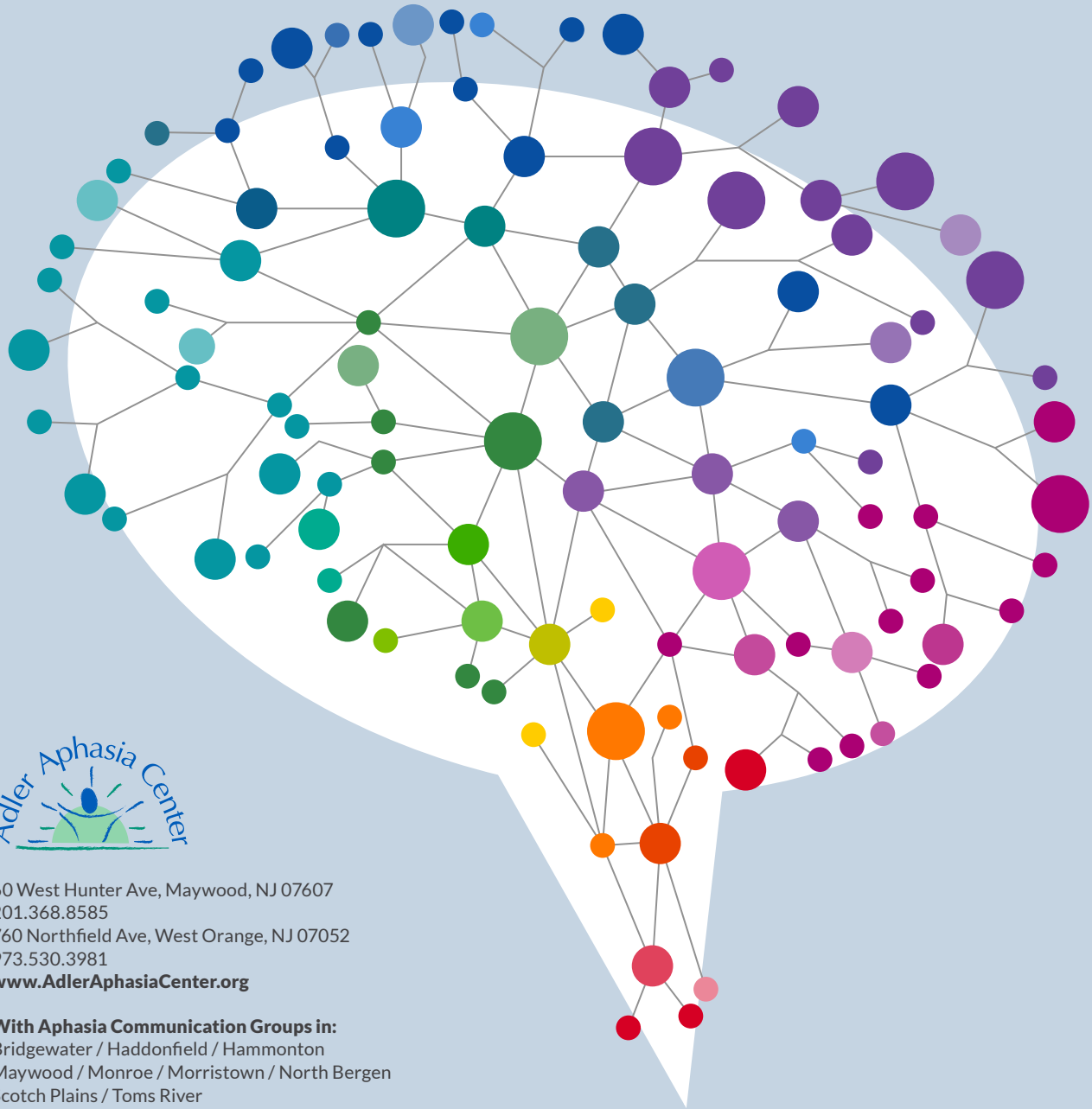


2017 Report to the Community

# CREATING CONNECTIONS



60 West Hunter Ave, Maywood, NJ 07607  
201.368.8585  
760 Northfield Ave, West Orange, NJ 07052  
973.530.3981  
[www.AdlerAphasiaCenter.org](http://www.AdlerAphasiaCenter.org)

**With Aphasia Communication Groups in:**  
Bridgewater / Haddonfield / Hammonton  
Maywood / Monroe / Morristown / North Bergen  
Scotch Plains / Toms River



Adler Aphasia Center is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

## WHO WE ARE

The Adler Aphasia Center is among the largest and one of the few free-standing long term aphasia treatment centers in the world dedicated to providing a therapeutic environment of innovative programming for people with aphasia and their caregivers. Since 2003, we have offered help and hope to stroke and brain injury survivors by teaching our members new communication skills, while offering opportunities to engage with others with aphasia and to re-engage in their communities. We are dedicated to improving the quality of life for the families and the caregivers themselves through professional support. Aphasia is a communication disorder that affects 40% of all stroke and brain trauma survivors. In NJ, there are an estimated 70,000 people with aphasia and nationally, 2.5 million. We operate two full service facilities with programming four days a week in Maywood and West Orange, NJ. We also offer ten Aphasia Communication Groups, a less intensive program offered twice a month in the NJ towns of Bridgewater, Haddonfield, Hammonton, Maywood, Monroe, Morristown, North Bergen, Scotch Plains and two groups in Toms River.



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Tamara Heimlich, Ph.D.

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Stephanie Perna

### Executive Administrative Assistant

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Angela Masson

## OUR CO-FOUNDER'S MESSAGE



When Mike and I created this Center, our mission was to connect people with aphasia and their caregivers to our Center's programs and services so that they could take an active role in their recovery. I'm thrilled to say we are succeeding in our mission while we continue to create new and important connections for our Center within the healthcare, education and business communities. We are so proud to work with all of our valuable community partners who help us enable our members with aphasia to engage, thrive and connect in the communities where they live and recover.

With gratitude and appreciation,

Elaine Adler

## OUR BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



Creating Connections is our theme this year, a theme that has resonated with Adler Aphasia Center since its existence 15 years ago. As a result of the influence and vision of two very special people, Elaine and Mike Adler, the Center has blossomed into a world renowned, research based, long term program focused on helping those with aphasia and their families work through the many challenges they face in their recovery. Our Center's staff and board of directors, our volunteers, our members and caregivers, and our donors and friends all play a central role in bridging new networks and creating connections for the aphasia community.

Looking forward, we count on all of you as there is still much to do in building new and meaningful connections that will benefit the Center's mission of helping people with aphasia and their families and expanding awareness about this language disorder. With your help in creating these vital connections in your own community, we can continue to grow. As we embark on our 16th year, our many collective strengths position us to provide an even greater impact. I personally look forward to collaborating and connecting with all of you as we aspire to building a better quality of life for all those living with aphasia and their families.

Cordially,

Charles P. Berkowitz

# CREATING CONNECTIONS FOR OUR MEMBERS WITH APHASIA

Considered among the gold standard of long-term aphasia treatment programs worldwide, the Adler Aphasia Center was one of the first pioneers in 2003 to use group treatment focusing on regaining conversational skills and re-engagement in life, called the Life Participation Approach to Aphasia (LPAA). By developing alternative strategies to help people with aphasia better communicate and create connections and experiences with each other, we are ultimately enhancing their quality of life and successfully producing meaningful real-life outcomes. As our program empowers those with aphasia to participate in their recovery process, we offer highly supportive interventions that support them in their recovery and allow them to more rapidly return to an active life. We make "living" the focus of their recovery, not aphasia.



## LIFE SKILLS

**Life Skills programming is the heart of what we do at our full service facilities in Maywood and West Orange.**

Aphasia has a profound effect on a person's life, causing emotional distress, depression, and social isolation, due to loss of language. Our programs aim to improve their communication skills, provide peer support, make new social connections, and build their confidence while improving their quality of life. In 2017:

- More than 100 people with aphasia participated each month in more than 50 innovative discussion group activities in Maywood and West Orange;
- Our programs logged over 12,000 therapeutic visits, improving our members' communication skills, confidence and self-esteem.



## TECHNOLOGY

**Our Technology program has become a national model in long-term therapeutic programs for people with aphasia.** Our Technology groups teach members the basics of navigating and operating an iPad, how to find an app and use it, and how to research topics on the web. These groups have begun to take their newfound skills a step further by designing, writing and videotaping monthly newsletters that are distributed to Center's donors along with a bi-monthly blog that began in late fall, featuring a member. Because of geographic distance or physical mobility challenges of stroke/brain trauma, we offer a new program of Virtual Communication Groups, established for homebound people through a web platform. In 2017:

- Our Technology program participants wrote 12 member newsletters and 2 blogs;
- We offered 1,700 sessions in our computer lab with 84% of our members participating;
- 34 participants engaged in 16 sessions with others in our Virtual Communication Group.



## SOMETHING SPECIAL

**This innovative, cutting edge vocational program** offers members an opportunity to participate in business development, handcraft jewelry and gifts, and engage in outreach to the corporate and local communities in which they share their experiences with aphasia in order to raise awareness and revenue for Center programming. In 2017:

- 45 members of *Something Special* donated 3,409 man hours to this program;
- Revenue of \$56,200 was achieved by selling 3,848 gifts with 560 orders taken;
- Proceeds from 2009 - 2017 totaled \$379,800;
- *Something Special* connected with 10 corporate partners.

## RESEARCH

**Our formal research program demonstrates the efficacy of our model to expand the understanding of aphasia rehabilitation.** We conduct annual assessment testing and satisfaction surveys which confirm that after one year of participation in Center programming, our members had statistically significant improvements in communication skills and in perceived quality of life. Our most recent member surveys showed in 2017 that:

- 95% reported they maintained/improved their communication skills;
- 98% reported they maintained/improved their knowledge of aphasia;
- 98% reported they maintained/improved their friendships;
- 94% reported they maintained/improved their participation in recreational and social activities;
- 89% reported they maintained/increased their comfort level in using technology;
- 91% reported they maintained/increased their use of technology in their daily lives;
- 98% reported they maintained/increased their level of comfort interacting in the community.

# CREATING CONNECTIONS FOR OUR CAREGIVERS

The power of connecting caregivers with other caregivers is profound. The positive effects from connecting with others who face similar challenges can be lasting. These social connections can often serve to buffer the effects of caregiver strain on their well-being. From day one, we understood the importance of supporting our caregivers and have made this as much a priority as serving our members with aphasia.

## CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Investing in their well-being is why we offer professional support for those whose loved ones are Center members, those who are professional aides and for the caregiving community that aren't affiliated with our program. In 2017:

- We offered 120 formal caregiver support groups, facilitated by a life coach in Maywood and in Bridgewater, one of our Aphasia Communication Group locations;



- We provided education, communication strategies, local resources and special speakers on relevant topics to an average of 38 caregivers each month;
- We provided numerous social opportunities to meet other caregivers informally through family centered events and outings, including holiday parties, our annual camping trip, annual family dinners, our annual musical performance and choir performances;
- We included our caregivers as part of our Adler public speaking team when visiting corporate partners to educate their employees about aphasia and caregiving.

# CREATING CONNECTIONS WITH OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers continue to be our lifeline in ensuring that our members with aphasia are being served with the finest of innovative programming and services. In addition, we have created connections with area corporations whose employees are fulfilling their volunteer requirements with our Center, thanks to the introduction of *Something Special* in their workplace. Giving their time, talent, and effort is profoundly impactful and we are so very appreciative of the enormous contributions they make to the Center. In 2017:

- 200 volunteers donated more than 10,000 hours of service to our programs throughout the state of NJ;



- Based on the latest national value of a volunteer hour being \$24.14, our Center's value of volunteer time is equal to \$241,400;
- Our 100+ volunteers consist of students, retirees, speech-therapists, medical professionals, caregivers, staff, corporate employees, and those taking time away from their careers.

# CREATING CONNECTIONS WITH OUR COMMUNITY

**Adler Aphasia Center is well-positioned to help our members and others living with aphasia benefit from creating connections** beyond our Centers and Aphasia Communication Groups throughout NJ. By building partnerships since 2003 with major corporations, local businesses, healthcare facilities and practices, statewide resources, universities, foundations, community organizations, places of worship, and more, we are increasing awareness about aphasia in new communities while promoting the need for more aphasia services. As experts in the field of long term aphasia treatment, we have expanded on these relationships to continually craft new collaborative endeavors to address the needs of people with aphasia.

## APHASIA COMMUNICATION GROUPS

**The demonstrated success of our programs in Maywood and West Orange** led to the development of less intensive, replicable models of service delivery. Aphasia Communication Groups operated in eight locations in 2017, in cooperation with other community resources. By exposing people with aphasia to long term therapeutic opportunities, we are showing them the important role that these groups play in their recovery. In 2017:

- We served an average of 69 people with aphasia per month in 8 NJ towns;
- We set the stage to add a new bilingual



- group serving the Hispanic community reaching more people throughout NJ;
- Our member surveys for those participating in these groups are asked to rate their satisfaction on a 5 point scale with 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree. These surveys showed:
    - o The group helps me communicate better. Ave. score = 4.69
    - o The group helps me learn about aphasia. Ave. score = 4.76
    - o The group helps me meet others with aphasia. Ave. score = 4.90
    - o The group helps me be more confident. Ave. score = 4.72
    - o The group helps me feel better about living with aphasia. Ave. score = 4.75

## MIKE ADLER APHASIA TASK FORCE

**In May, 2017, The Mike Adler Aphasia Task Force was created into law**, making NJ the first state in the country to enact legislation to increase the provision of support services to people with aphasia. The establishment of this Task Force ensures there will be appropriate informational resources and support systems available in NJ to assist people with aphasia and their families. An 11-member task force, made up of state, county and private officials including residents with aphasia, is in formation and whose purpose will be to: monitor the prevalence of aphasia in NJ; assess

the unmet needs of people with aphasia and their families; identify and facilitate the establishment of aphasia support groups and other resources designed to assist in satisfying these unmet needs; and provide recommendations to the Governor and Legislature for legislation or other action that would further facilitate support for New Jerseyans living with aphasia and their families.

## OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

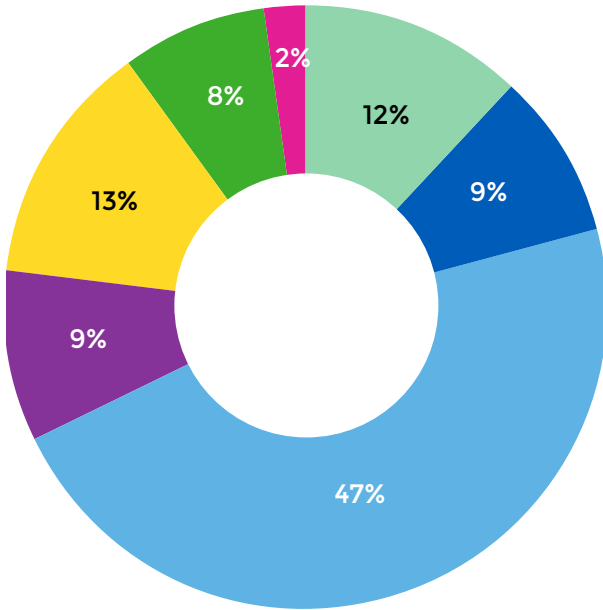
**The Center works closely with community organizations, businesses, hospitals, rehab facilities, places of worship, universities, healthcare students and professionals across NJ** to educate people about aphasia and our Center. These partnerships enable us to provide specialized aphasia communication training to students and healthcare professionals each year, improving access to care, entitlements, and vital services for people with communication deficits. In 2017:

- We reached more than 3,600 people throughout NJ and the metropolitan region;
- We visited 67 venues across the state to raise awareness about aphasia and our Center;
- We trained close to 600 medical residents, speech students and professionals, nurses, occupational and physical therapists in our flagship facility in Maywood.



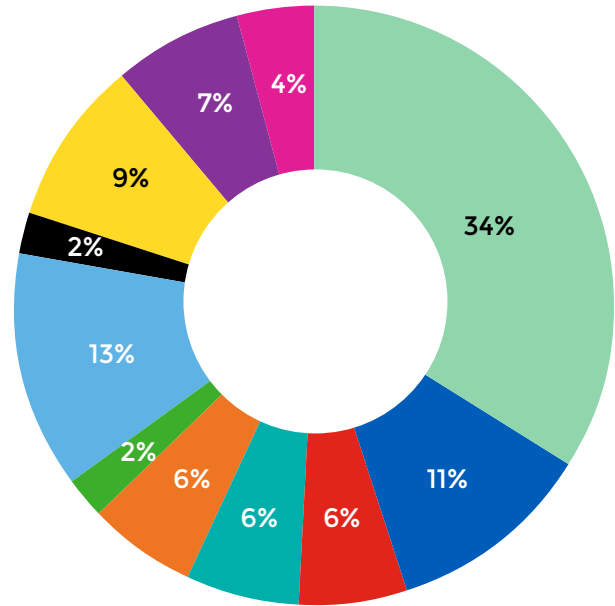
# OUR SOURCES OF INCOME

Where the money comes from:



- Corporations
- Foundations
- Individual
- Government Grants
- Special Events
- Member Fees
- Something Special Revenue

And where the money goes:



- Life Skills
- Technology
- Something Special
- Education, Training and Outreach
- Research
- Adler at Hadassah Academic College
- Adler at West Orange
- Aphasia Communication Groups
- Management & Administration
- Fundraising
- Volunteer Management

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We apologize for any errors or omissions.*

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