

History of PGV Programs

Parent Education Survey: 2014-2016

PGV engaged in a rigorous analysis of their international programs to assess their programming strengths and impact. As a result, they devised a parent education survey to determine where to focus their resources. The survey results, completed by over 250 parents of children with hearing loss, electronically and manually, collected data on parent perceptions, parent supports, levels of parental stress, self-care, and informational interests across cultures. It validated and confirmed PGV's need to direct their resources to caregiver well-being. Essential Programs to Coach and Empower emerged as a result, as well as PGV's book, *Coaching and Empowering Caregivers of Children with Hearing Loss, an approach to foster well-being*.

India: 2008, 2017-2018

With support from the Hear the World Foundation, PGV partnered with V-Connect, a parent organization in Mumbai, India to share elements of Essential Program to Coach and Empower. Three international conferences occurred in 2017 in the cities of Mumbai, Pune, and Ahmedabad. More than 150 parents and practitioners affiliated with V-Connect participated. Consultation to Directors of the board, meetings with disability organizations, and workshops with practitioners also took place. In 2018, PGV returned to India to provide 14 V-Connect leaders an intensive three-day retreat and training. Their partnership began in 2008 on Joanne's first visit to tour and assess priority needs in Mumbai and Pune. It is during this first visit that Joanne, and volunteer partner Uma Soman, met Vahistai Daboo. She is a parent of a child with hearing loss and currently a practitioner in auditory verbal therapy who would partner with PGV in more current years.

Fostering Caregiver Well-Being: 2019

Joanne Travers, Founding Director of PGV, wrote and published *Coaching and Empowering Caregivers of Children with Hearing Loss, an approach to foster well-being*. The book is based on positive psychology and depicts five domains of caregiver well-being. It is based on PGV's parent survey and Essential Programs to Coach and Empower Caregivers. With a grant, PGV published and shipped 100 free copies to more than 30 countries. The resource is available to order on Amazon.

2020-21

Sadly, the global pandemic has hindered further international travel and projects. We hope to regain our footing in the future and engage in PGV's positive psychology mission: fostering caregiver well-being.

Past Programming in Aural Education and Parent Supports occurred in the Dominican Republic and Honduras in partnership with over 70 volunteers

HONDURAS: October 2007-2012

Carol Serna, Cornell Graduate and a program manager for water projects at Agua del Pueblo in Honduras partnered with PGV to help a school age child named Angie with hearing loss who had no supports in her community. When Carol first contacted Greater Voice, she mentioned how no other organization she had reached out to offered help. Joanne immediately helped Carol understand hearing health, communication choices, and the learning needs of children with hearing loss. Joanne guided Carol in how to obtain audiological evaluations, school placement and language support. Through the Gift of Hearing program, Angie received her first hearing aid. Angie attended a private school, Frederico Froebel, which required \$240/mo in tuition and slp services. Carol raised over US\$8,000.00 to support Angie.

Joanne and Carol travelled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to meet Angie, teachers at her school and family in June, 2009. A day of training was given to 18 SPED teachers in oral deaf education. Other visits included meeting other school administrators and parents of children with hearing loss. Joanne and Carol gathered with over 40 families and DHH children to engage in

conversation on their interests and needs. They also visited Angie's home and community. These visits allowed Greater Voice to assess the realities of what schools, parents and Angie were experiencing. They met education leaders and had discussions with 7 different institutions: 3 schools, 2 hospitals, 1 disability foundation, 1 therapist. Carol and Joanne were caught in the 2009 coo, and had to depart on the last plane back to the United States. It was their last day of the mission! Support was given to Angie while she attended the private school until her family enrolled her in a home town school with supports in 2011.

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: 2002-2015

Needs Assessment, Awareness of Hearing Loss and Oral Deaf Education November 8 - November 16, 2002

Country tour that assessed priority needs. Joanne Travers with interpreter Estebania Concepcion. Workshops/Activities included: Understanding Hearing Loss, What is Auditory Oral Education? Need for Parent Support and Groups, Hearing Health Management, Audiology and Hearing Aids, individual parent consultation, home and school visits, etc. (Boca Chica, San Andres, Santo Domingo, San Cristobal, Santiago, San Pedros de Macoris, La Romana.)

Parent Support and Teacher Assessment, Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa April 26 - May 1, 2003

Workshops/Activities: Parent consultation, groups and support, home visits, interactive teacher discussions. Candidate interviews for US based training program. (Boca Chica, Santo Domingo) *Joanne Travers and Estebania Concepcion*

US Based Training, Preparing a New Generation of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in the Dominican Republic

October 25 - November 12, 2003

Workshops/Activities: Intensive learning experience for eight delegates. 24 Professional training workshops, classes and site visits were specific to participant objectives during the training period. Over 35 organizations and individuals were involved in delivery information on dozens of topics. Action planning was required, from which projects were implementation in the DR as a result of this learning experience. (Massachusetts, USA.)

Training/Audiology Hearing Screening Mission at Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa July 5 – July 10, 2004

Activities: Evaluated over 100 children and assessed cochlear implant candidacy for 15 children. Workshops in Cochlear Implants, Assessment and Evaluations, ABR, FM Systems, and Parent Support. (Santo Domingo, Boca Chica 1 day) *Joanne Travers, Dr. Todd Sauter, and Frank Lepine*

Professional Development at the Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa in Auditory Learning and Development

December 4 - December 11, 2004

Workshops/Activities: Auditory Oral Education, Auditory Checklists, Fostering collaboration between teachers and parents, working with technicians, therapy demonstrations and parent consultation. (Sto Domingo, Boca Chica 1 day) *Joanne Travers, Jane Driscoll, Lindsay Rodriguez and Barbara Manning*

Visit to DR with Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf March 6 – March 8, 2005

Workshops/Activities: Foundations in Literacy Development, Building International Affiliation, parent consultation, follow up on scholarship recipients, (Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa, Santo Domingo) Parent and Teacher consultation, (CASSA, Boca Chica 1 day) *Joanne Travers, Greg Zick, and Galya Hutsell*

International Visitor Training Initiative, Yadixa Messina Arvelo March 8 – March 19, 2005

Workshops/Activities: Site visit activities at area hospitals, schools for the deaf, and mainstream settings. Learning experiences involved cochlear implants, individual therapy, mainstream education, itinerant work. (Massachusetts)

Audiology and Auditory Development Mission, (a Rotary International Foundation matching grant) May 28-June 4, 2005

Workshops/Activities: Teacher training in Auditory Development and hearing evaluations for over 60 students and 8 staff. Fitting of hearing aids, parent consultation, acoustic modifications to classrooms, teacher training, training in basic audiology and hearing aid support. Additional workshop at a Pediatric Hospital and nursing program. Location: Centro Alternativo Experimental del Sordo (CAES), San Pedro de Macoris. *Joanne Travers, Elizabeth Tracz, Julie Neumann, Dr. Dan Hendrix, Susan and John Woolard*

CASSA: Teacher Training in Auditory Development and Hearing Evaluations October 1 - October 7, 2005

Workshops/Activities: Auditory Development and Building Literacy Skills, Audiology Assessment and fitting children with hearing aids, Parent Consultation. (CASSA, Boca Chica). *Joanne Travers, Lindsay Rodriguez, Dr. Lisa Walker*

Program follow through, San Pedro de Macoris and Boca Chica January 23 - January 27, 2006

Workshops/Activities: Soundproofing classrooms, parent discussions, meetings with Rotarians, parent and teacher meetings at CASSA, Boca Chica, other business meetings. *Joanne Travers and Estebania Concepcion*

Seizing Every Opportunity for Social and Emotional Development July 1 - July 7, 2006

Workshops/Activities: Social and Emotional Considerations, Building a Child's Self Esteem, Individual therapy demonstrations, parent consultation. (Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa in Santo Domingo, with abreif visit to CASSA in San Andres). *Joanne Travers and Eleanor Jones*

CASSA: Auditory Learning and Literacy Development February 3 – February 8, 2007

Workshops/Activities: Importance of Literacy Development of the Deaf Child, Understanding the Classroom Environment, Parent Consultation and Support. (Santo Domingo, CASSA, Boca Chica). *Joanne Travers, Jane Driscoll, Michael Moon, Laura Peterson, Iraida Williams, Kelly Kelleher*

CASSA: Auditory Learning: Natural Communication and Lesson Plan Development June 23 - 29, 2007

Workshops/Activities: Developing Lesson Plans, Understanding Natural Communication, Learning Through Play Parent Consultation and support. (CASSA, Boca Chica, Santo Domingo (1 afternoon)). *Joanne Travers, Diana Sanchez and Enriche Sanchez*

International Visitor Project, Yadixa Messina and Onelia Aybar November, 2007

Visiting teachers from Dominican Republic participated in vocational visits to various sites in Massachusetts. Organization's first Gala that celebrated 5 years of Greater Voice projects; Lions Club of Ipswich donated.

Parent Support Groups, Diploma Program, Therapy Room Construction January, 2008

Workshop/Activity: Parent / Teacher relationships that benefit children, Auditory development, Emotional and social support given to parents. (CASSA, Santo Domingo). Discussion on a 'diploma program' with PUCMM faculty and student meeting on deafness and auditory methodology, technology and cochlear implants. Meeting with Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo on the constructing of a PGV supported therapy room. Hospital tour and discussion with ENT about the fellowship programs and projects related to hearing loss. *Joanne Travers and Iraida Williams*

Teacher Training, Parent workshop, PUCMM April 2-6, 2008

Workshop/Activity: Workshop and meetings in Boca Chica, Moca, Cotui, and Pimental delivering content to parents and teachers in audiology and teaching the deaf to listen and talk; meetings with parents. Business meeting on diploma discussion, CI discussion with teachers, and consultation to families that received cochlear implants at Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa. *Joanne Travers and Katelyn Driscoll*

Audiology Mission: Coordinated support for Utah State students May, 2008

AUD students worked with PGV to plan an Audiological Mission to Dominican Republic to evaluate and aid children (Boca Chica, San Andres, Moca, Pimental). Peace Corps support. Donations of more than 50 aids. *Neal Riemer*

CASSA: MED Students (3) from Smith College complete Externship May/June, 2008

Twenty-day site visit to support teachers and students at CASSA in Boca Chica. Activities included observation, in class support, development of day-to-day classroom activities and therapy. *Marianne Watson, Kritsy Lietz, Amanda Asar*

Literacy Development at Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa June 2008

Workshop/Activity: Over 20 training hours completed with teachers on early child literacy development. Also including individual therapy sessions and parent workshops and consultation (participants from Santa Rosa, CASSA, Moca, CAES, National Escuela del Sordomudos). Daily workshops on Cochlear Implants, New Teacher Orientation, Access/Classroom Acoustics, and Transitioning to the mainstream. *Joanne Travers, Laura Peterson, Janet Lane*

CASSA: Exploring Language through Thematically Structured Vocabulary November 20 - November 26, 2008

Workshop/Activity: Explored a thematic approach to building language through thematic instruction: Baseball. Structured classroom activities and afternoon teacher discussions involving cognition listening, language, outdoor play, and literacy. Parent Workshops on Building Self-Esteem (Santa Rosa and CASSA). Diploma discussion at Santa Rosa. Business discussions and consultation to Director of CASSA on academic programs and services. *Joanne Travers, Marianne Watson, Suzie Aaberg*

CASSA: MED Student and Board Member completes Externship January 7–26, 2009

Smith College graduate Christine Derosiers taught in the DR for 3 years, and chose to spend her three-week externship at CASSA. Activities: modelling and teaching ways to develop listening and spoken language, fostering subject matter and curriculum under the frameworks of Dominican education system. Purchased supplies/tools and explored strategies in audition.

CASSA: Language Learning through Literacy, Program Assessment March, 2009

Assessed academic programs at the school and met with teachers. The visit supported classroom activities, facilitated learning to listen, and developed language strategies through literacy. Activities: Book Bag projects, individualizing therapy for students, creative solutions for classroom storytelling involving discussion, questions and answers. Workshops: Parent meetings, teacher discussion focused on literacy. *Laura Peterson and Joanne Travers*

CASSA: Audiology and Fostering Independence in the Use and Care of Technology November 14-17, 2009

Evaluated 50 students currently enrolled in CASSA. Over 20 children received hearing aids as well FM technology. Jackie Solorzano.(LsLs) worked in class. Activities: Evaluations, ear molds, personal FM system and fittings, in class support. Workshops: Parent Involvement, Experience Books, Personal FM Systems, Literacy activities using technology as the theme, "Hurray for Harold". *Joanne Travers, Dr. Dierdre Anderson, Dr. Melissa Mendrygal*

International Visitor Training Initiative: January 5-13, 2010

The Director of CASSA, Diorka Nolasco a Teacher of the Deaf Tomasa Rodriguez were invited to New England for a US-visitor training program. Activities: Site visits at preschool program in New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Administrative meetings with Directors of Schools, Internships in Audiology, Planning and implementation of CASSA curriculum with an Auditory Development focus.

CASSA: Literacy and Language through Audition March, 2010

Classroom support and Workshops focused on storybooks, emerging literacy strategies and using audition to develop language and conversational speech. Parent workshops fostered literacy and language at home. *Laura Peterson and Joanne Travers.*

CASSA: Audiology Mission and continuing Literacy/Language Development September, 2010

Audiology evaluations, technology assessment, speech perception, literacy/language development. *Dr. Marissa Mendrygal, Dr. Robin Asmar, Laura Peterson, Joanne Travers*

CASSA: Continued support in Auditory Development November, 2010

Learning through play and thematic based learning. Parent Participation. *Joanne Travers and Marianne Watson*

CASSA: Assessment of Language and Literacy Development March, 2011

Explored teacher communication, documentation and progress. Also explored land and building options; none were revealed. Land tied up privately. *Joanne Travers, Laura Peterson, Elizabeth Boschini*

CASSA: Audiology Mission September, 2011

Transferred Hearing Health and Audiology Management to local Dominican, Misael Restituyo. Training on FM Systems, hearing instruments and ABR was conducted. Team also investigated Lions Club support for CASSA. *Dr. Todd Sauter, Dr. Dierdre Anderson, Joanne Travers, Richard Denton, and Misael Restituyo*

International Visitor Training Initiative, February, 2012

Misael Restituyo, Audiology Specialist from Centro Cristiano de Servicios Medicos in Santo Domingo, continued his professional development in Educational Audiology and Oral Habilitation by visiting US schools, habilitation programs and individual auditory verbal specialist in Massachusetts.

Center Based Learning at Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa: July 29-August 3rd, 2012

A container of supplies was shipped and materials equipped/furnished four preschool classrooms. Material was delivered to Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo before a Partners mission team arrived for training workshops. Collaboratively designed and set up Center Based Learning in four preschool classrooms. FM systems were also installed. Parent meetings focused on Building Resilience at both Ayuda al Sordo Santa Rosa and at Centro Cristiano de Servicios Medicos (CCSM). *Joanne Travers, Neal Riemer, Ashley Kachelmeyer, Victoria Vendola*

Constructing Therapy Room for Hearing and Speech Center, Hospital Elias Santana, 2012-2013

Joanne Travers visited hospital Elias Santana in Los Alcarrizos (Santo Domingo) several times to design, construct, and equip a speech and hearing room. PGV advised CCSM administration and funded the project, with donations and money raised in 2012. Joanne has also consulted staff on habilitation, parent support and parent groups since 2011, working with clinic staff at CCSM. She works strategically with the hospital to develop sustainability of individual therapy services for children with hearing loss, and invited Estella Maria Rivera (from CASSA) to deliver individual services at the newly constructed site.

Building a Sustainable Hearing and Speech Center, Hospital Elias Santana April and June, 2013

Marianne Watson and Joanne Travers visited hospital Elias Santana (CCSM) in Los Alcarrizos twice in 2013. Introductory courses in Auditory Development were given to more than 40 teachers with a follow up workshop on importance and relevance of individual therapy. Topics included Hierarchy of Speech, Amplification, Ambient Environments, and individualized listening and spoken language therapies. Parent Workshops were given on Resilience, Advocacy, Jill Bader's Ten Step Strategies, and Auditory Learning in an individual therapy environment. The therapy

room was completed in April of 2013, stocked completed full of therapy toys, education materials, books and related resources. In addition to the therapy room, an adjacent resource room includes books and content binders containing information in: Technology, Advocacy, Auditory Development and Practice, and information for Parents.

Auditory Based Practice and Emerging Literacy at Center for Hearing and Speech, CCSM November, 2013

Laura Peterson and Joanne Travers returned to the Center for Hearing and Speech to work with staff. PGV continues to assess the community's needs. They visited a school for the deaf in Los Alcarrazas, a preschool, and a newly formed aural therapy program. Parent workshops: parent education in auditory learning, advocacy, informational needs. Teacher Workshop: Learning Language, Auditory Development, Literacy Development, Individualized learning in a therapy.

Individualized Therapy Training at CCSM 2013

Olga Correa, a teacher from Spain, partnered with PGV to provide training to the aural specialist at the Aural Rehabilitation Center at CCSM. Learning to listen, counselling parents, and related teaching supports engaged the practitioner in aural language development for ten students.

Essential Programs to Coach and Empower Parents. August, 2014

Neal Riemer and Joanne Travers travelled throughout the Dominican Republic to meet more than 150 parents in several different communities. (Boca Chica, San Pedro de Macoris, Santo Domingo, Los Alcarrazos, Mocca). They piloted PGV's new parent training, Essential Program to Coach and Empower. Joanne and Neal facilitated strengths-based practices, storytelling, and empathetic listening exercises to engage and inform parents. They also completed manual parent education surveys in low resources communities.

El OIDO: 2006-2015

PGV wrote, designed and distributed El Oido all across the Dominican Republic to inform families and institutions in oral deaf education. With support from multiple teachers and partners, El Oido was printed in Spanish only. Go to www.greatervoice.com to access these newsletters (under publications).

GIVE THE GIFT of HEARING: 2003- 2013

In 2003, more than 25 new Rexton hearing aids were donated to students at Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo to kick start PGV's Give the Gift of Hearing program. An additional 50+ new hearing aids from Siemens were dispensed to students at CASSA over the next few years. Donated FM systems were also provided to students at CASSA and Instituto de Ayuda al Sordo. Personnel at both schools were trained in how to care for, charge, configure and assemble systems. In total, PGV has donated more than 500 high quality hearing aids (analogue, programmable or digital) of various brands.

The Give the Gift of Hearing program expanded in 2013 to include donations to support listening and spoken language therapy. In 2013, six sponsors supported individual therapy at Centro Cristiano de Servicios Medicos (CCSM). In 2014, PGV gave ten more children this individualized support. By 2016, twenty more students were sponsored at the Aural Habilitation Center at CCSM in Los Alcarrazos. Partners for A Greater Voice recruited Estella Maria Rodriguez from CASSA to provide therapy for these students. The center provides coaching to parents and frequently scheduled parent meetings.

There have been over 50 donors that contributed to PGV's Give the Gift of Hearing since 2001.

Other Greater Voice Support:

2003: HAITI

Three year old child named Lotie was rejected by the city hospital when her mother asked for a hearing test. “Come back when she is 5”. PGV counselled a friend of Lotie’s family who reached out to PGV. Joanne helped coordinate audiological evaluation in Santo Domingo and enrolled Loti in PGV’s Give the Gift of Hearing program. Diagnosed profoundly deaf, Lotie’s parents received a PGV packet that included parent information, resources and hearing aids. Loti’s mother was a nurse and well educated. She engaged Lotie in listening and language therapy. Her mother since moved Lotie to southern Florida, where she received a cochlear implant and has access to education and services.

March 2006: INDIA

Teacher of the Deaf, Uma Soman-Gokhale and Executive Director, Joanne Travers assessed and visited 10 programs for the deaf in Mumbai and Pune, India. Observations and program discussions involved audiology clinics, early intervention centers, private therapy centers, mainstream programs, and schools for the deaf. Joanne addressed parents in both Mumbai and Pune, holding three meetings with over 80 parents of children with severe and profound hearing losses. The preferred mode of communication is the spoken word and remarkably some of the children learn two or more spoken languages. Parent meetings incorporated discussion on the following topics: social emotional growth, transitioning, assistive technology and general information on hearing loss. Joanne consulted Vahishtai, parent and teacher of deaf, how to start parent network at AURED, a school and support service for children learning listening and spoken language. This organization is now called V-Connect, which is currently directed by Vahishtai Daboo.