



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Parkinson Voice Project Funds Andrews University Clinic

BERRIEN SPRINGS, Mich.—The Andrews University Speech-Language & Hearing Clinic was recently awarded a SPEAK OUT! Therapy and Research Center Grant by the [Parkinson Voice Project](#). Valued at more than \$280,000, the award provides extensive training and services offered by the nonprofit Parkinson Voice Project over the next five years, including \$10,000 per year for resources over the same period. Andrews is one of 16 universities across the country who have been awarded this newly introduced grant, which enables universities to provide free teletherapy to Parkinson’s patients anywhere in the recipient’s state.

The grant supports research in the School of Communication Sciences & Disorders and enables Andrews University to train students in the SPEAK OUT! program. It also allows the clinic to have a wider reach within the state of Michigan, giving patients access to free teletherapy for voice, speech and swallowing disorders that can accompany Parkinson’s disease.

The speech-language pathology and audiology program has partnered with Parkinson Voice Project every year since 2018. Previous supportive grants provided materials, limited funding and free training programs for graduate students. Jenica Joseph, assistant professor of speech-language pathology notes, “Through grants from Parkinson Voice Project and a partnership we established with the Michigan Parkinson Foundation in 2020, our hope is that everyone in the state of Michigan with Parkinson’s will have access to the SPEAK OUT! Program. We will conduct and publish research related to the SPEAK OUT! program and our

Parkinson's participants and their caregivers. We also hope to continue to build partnerships with local and statewide Parkinson programs.”

Kristin Rossi, CEO of the Michigan Parkinson Foundation says, “Our partnership with Andrews University for SPEAK OUT! training has been described by some of our clients as ‘life-changing.’ During the pandemic when so many people were isolated and quite literally losing their voices, the team at Andrews answered our call and worked tirelessly to offer programming virtually and have sustained this pivotal partnership for three years. Congratulations to the whole Andrews team on receiving the very well-deserved grant from the Parkinson Voice Project. We are honored to work with you for the betterment of the Parkinson’s community.”

“The Andrews University School of Communication Sciences & Disorders and Speech-Language & Hearing Clinic have committed to support our local and statewide Parkinson’s community. This commitment is a lifelong commitment that we have made with our clients,” Joseph affirms. “We work in a region where the community is engaged and willing to participate in group activities. With this grant, we can also promote a lot of local events to make the general population more aware of how to identify early Parkinson signs and look for treatment. By developing research we think that we can have more health professionals (and others) advocate for the program.”

Parkinson Voice Project is a nonprofit organization based in Texas that aims to help those with Parkinson’s and related movement disorders regain and retain speech and communication skills while minimizing potentially life-threatening swallowing complications. To do this, they developed the SPEAK OUT! Program, which utilizes principles of motor learning, helping individuals convert speech from an automatic function into an intentional act. The program combines education, speech therapy, workbooks, flashcards, online practice sessions, weekly speech and singing groups, and regular re-evaluations to give its patients the best care possible.

To learn more about the Parkinson Voice Project grant, visit <https://parkinsonvoiceproject.org/andrews-university-280k-grant/>.

Founded in 1874, Andrews University is the flagship institution of higher education for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and offers more than 150 areas of study, including advanced degrees. Its main campus is in Berrien Springs, Michigan, but the University also provides instruction at colleges and universities in more than 25 countries around the world.

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Byline: Isabella Koh, University Communication student writer

Jenica Joseph.jpg: Jenica Joseph, assistant professor of speech-language pathology at Andrews University. **Photo credit:** Courtesy of Jenica Joseph