



Speaking From The Center

A Newsletter from the Speaking Center of Agnes Scott College

Spring 2003

Editors: Khara Agana, Veronica Henson-Phillips

Congratulations to the Class of '03 from the Speaking Center!



Speaking Center Hosts 4th Annual Informative Speech Contest

The speech contests are one of the most entertaining events on campus. This spring's Informative Speech Contest definitely did not fail! Several of the speeches brought an international flavor, from discussing the West African Ashanti people and their rituals to the Southeast European Wonders of the World. Nine contestants competed for the winning title of the Best Informative Speech. They ranged from first years to fifth years, and all came dressed in their best business attire to present their speech in the Film Room of ground floor Buttrick on March 21. Besides the international flavor, the audience was also informed about the dangers of eating meat, the Sikh religion, and many more. However, the winning speech was about Huntington's disease presented by Karen Jones, a fifth year student at Agnes Scott. Her articulate expression of words, her resonant voice, and her powerful, informative speech made her deserving of 1st Place. Last semester Karen won 2nd place in the Persuasive Speech Contest. Her competition did make it difficult, though. 2nd place winner, Sonal Chaddha presented such a wonderful speech about the Middle Eastern city of Dubai, you would have been provoked to call your travel agent. 3rd place winner, Anna Hoppmann informed us about Eight at Eight, a high end dating service that helps single young professionals meet one another.

Other participants included Linda Githiora, Abena Frempong, Rosemary Lokko, Harneet Kang, Milena Tordodorova and Tara Bech. If you missed out on this year's Informative Speech Contest, don't miss out on next year's. Next year's 5th annual Informative Speech Contest will definitely be an ASC event to look forward to.



Speech Contest Contestants

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Distinguished Judges for the Informative Speech Contest: l-r, Amy Whitworth, Faculty Assistant, Faculty Services; Catherine Neiner, Director of Career Planning; Cheryl Ferebee, Assistant Registrar

Kudos to Speaking Center Tutors!

Sara Simmons was recently elected Senate President and participated in the 2003 College Speak-Off, sponsored by the National Speakers Association of Georgia.

Jenny Wiese was recently elected SGA Treasurer.

Khara Agana recently took 1st Place in the 2003 College Speak-off, sponsored by The National Speakers Association of Georgia. She also received a Career Initiative Award from the Office of Career Planning.



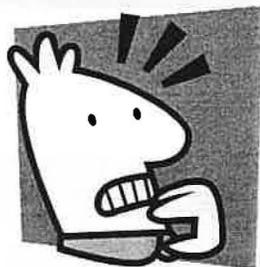
Veronica Henson-Phillips with Contest Winner Khara Agana



Jenny Wiese



Sarah Simmons and Khara Agana



Top Adult Fears*

1. Speaking before a group
2. Heights
3. Insects and bugs
4. Financial Problems
5. Deep water
6. Sickness
7. Death



*People's Almanac Presents
The Book of Lists



Spectators at the Speak-Off

Speaking From the Center is published by the Speaking Center to provide a forum for ideas about speaking and inform the campus community about the activities of the program. The Speaking Center is located in McCain Library in room G-37 on the ground floor. Tutors are available to assist you Sunday through Thursday. Hours are posted outside of the Center. Please visit, call or email with questions and comments speakcenter@agnesscott.edu. Phone: 404-471-5371. The Coordinator of the Speaking Center is Professor Veronica Henson-Phillips, extension 6915.

Speaking Center Staff Visits Mary Washington College in Virginia

This month Speaking Center coordinator Veronica Henson-Phillips and tutors Sarah Simmons and Jenny Wiese visited the Speaking Center staff at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Virginia. They met with Speaking Center Director, Dr. Esther Yook, Dr. Anand Rao, Director of the Speaking Intensive Program and student speech consultants.

We look forward to hosting our new friends in the future!



Jenny Wiese, Sarah Simmons and Mary Washington tutors.



Dr. Rao and Dr. Yook of the Mary Washington Speaking Center.

An Interview With the Coordinator- Veronica Henson-Phillips

By Khara Agana

Q: Where are you from?

A: My hometown is San Diego, California.

Q: What was your college experience like?

A: I had a fantastic college experience! I attended the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) for undergraduate and graduate school. During the time I attended, there were about 12,000 students, even more now. ASC has a close knit feeling, UCSD is just too big. However, the beach is only half a mile from campus!

Q: When did you become interested in public speaking?

A: I became seriously interested in public speaking while in high school. My drama teacher encouraged me to enter competitions after directing me in a couple of plays, soon I was hooked.

Q: How did you become interested in voice and speech?

A: In graduate school one of my professors was the late Edith Skinner who did seminal work in the area of voice and speech. In fact, her speech teacher was the model for the Henry Higgins character that actor Rex Harrison played in the movie "My Fair Lady." She was the definitive authority in the area of phonetics and speech when she was alive. Professor Skinner and master voice teacher Mary Corrigan were my early inspirations. I have always loved accents and dialects, in my early teaching years I worked only with actors. However, non-theatre people began to inquire how they might improve their voice and speech and before long I was working with them as well.

Q: How did you find your way to Agnes Scott?

A: After teaching in the Communications Departments of Georgia State and Clark Atlanta, I was hired by Agnes Scott in 1998. I truly love teaching Voice and Diction, Public Speaking and Coordinating the Speaking Center. I value the opportunity to share my expertise in the areas of voice, speech and theatre.

(Continued on page 4)

Get Rid of Annoying Clutter/Filler Words!

Here are some proven ways to get rid of those annoying "filler/clutter" words:

1. Practice your presentations out loud. The more familiar you are with the thoughts you wish to express, the less likely you will need to search for the "right" words when you're up before a group.
2. Record your practice and real presentations. Many people are unaware how often they use these annoying fillers. You may be surprised.
3. Try to catch the start of "um" and "ah" (you can feel it forming in your vocal cords), then replace it with a pause. Count silently "one, two" while saying nothing to your audience. This takes practice, but will be much appreciated by listeners.
4. Keep a glass of water handy so you can sip it in between key ideas. This will force you to pause and not utter a filler word (unless you can throw your voice).
5. Increase your eye contact. Most "ums" and "ahs" come when we are looking away from people. Practice looking into people's eyes more directly and you'll find it difficult to utter those filler words.
6. Ask a "presentation buddy" to sit in on your presentations and provide you an agreed upon silent signal if you start using the fillers. For example, she could raise a couple fingers near her mouth to remind you to monitor your word choice.

After consciously applying the tips above for a few presentations, you will break yourself of the habit and increase your effectiveness.

(Continued from page 3)

Q: What is your favorite pastime?

A: Hanging out with my college sweetheart (and husband) Stephen and our lovely daughter Vivian, age 7.

Q: Favorite Speeches?

A: The first is by the late Congresswoman from Texas, Barbara Jordan. Her rich commanding voice and sharp intellect was mesmerizing. The speech she made at the Democratic National Convention in 1976 is a classic. Secondly, any of the speeches by Robert Kennedy. He had the ability to make the audience member feel as if he were speaking to just you. He radiated sincerity and warmth. In fact one of my favorite quotes is by Robert Kennedy: "some see things the way they are and say why, I dream things that never were and say why not?"



Speaking Center Coordinator Veronica Henson-Phillips with Dr. Esther Yook of the Mary Washington Speaking Center.

Q: What do you like most about the Speaking Center?

A: It's a wonderful resource for the entire campus. My ultimate goal is to have more and more students, staff and faculty avail themselves of its resources.



Speaking from the Center

A Newsletter from the Speaking Center of Agnes Scott College

Fall 2003

Editors: Crystal Pough and Veronica Henson-Phillips

Speaking Center hosts the 5th Annual Persuasive Speech Contest

Thanks to the Judges!



Judges of the Fall Persuasive Speech Contest: Chaplain Wilson, Dr. Jennifer Lund, and Professor Mungavin-Salva

In a room filled with energy, there were five speeches, from various topics. All women waited nervously as their names were called out. The subject matter ranged from NASA projects, to adoption policies, international education, and even human recycling, which was the winning speech about the unethical practices of business—especially regarding lay-offs in corporate America.

Every year, the Speaking Center at Agnes Scott is excited about the persuasive speech contest because it gives students a chance to prove to themselves—and the audience that they can do what only 10 percent of the world population claims to do, which is to speak very well.

It is no wonder that every contestant is awarded with a certificate of participation because each individual has given their best to their presentation. These contestants were as follows: Veronique Lunganga, Jasmine Adams, Celeste Fredericks, Susan Holliday, Kate Heidbrink.

Many thanks to those who attended the annual persuasive speech contest. Additionally, thanks to Judges, who were Chaplain Wilson, Professor Mungavin-Salva, and Dr. Jennifer Lund. If you missed the time with prizes, exciting presentations, join us in the spring, when the informative speech contest launches off.



(l to r) Celeste Fredericks (3rd Place); Kate Heidbrink (2nd Place); Susan Holliday (1st Place Winner)

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Tailoring Your Speech: Words that Win the Audience

As a new intern, I was excited to work for a high-profile job, and the employer had asked me to prepare a speech for a statewide conference. My speech would address some department chiefs, so I had to be ready. I had less than a week to prepare, so with much research, I outlined a speech and could not wait to show my delivery skills. With the use of Excel charts, color lines, and graphs, I felt that the speech would be a winner.

Suddenly, my plans changed when the supervisor asked me to deliver the speech, at the state conference meeting, which was not the crowd I'd prepared for. And I had only five minutes...

Tailoring Your Speech....

My confidence became shaky, and my sweaty palms perspired even more, because I could not cancel the assignment. After all, this entire office depended on my presentation, to impress powerful leaders, and the company wanted me to sell their idea. Although I was equipped, I did not anticipate that the speech would be given to mostly supervisors, who were white and male. Instead, I expected an audience with a mixed ethnic background. The project's subject matter dealt with diversity and government. What was I to do? This was not the place to cry against social injustice, but rather convince the individuals in my audience to feel passionate about what I felt passionate about. In simple, logical statements, I had to emphasize the goals and ideas of my company.

The scenario mentioned above may seem imaginary, but it was a real-life experience that happened at my internship with one of the Governor's Offices. Similarly, you may feel that your audience is not what you expected—they may be more hostile, culturally or socially different, or even have opposite viewpoints from you. This does not mean that your speech has to suffer. We, as public speakers, must research, organize, and deliver the speech with excellence. Most importantly, however, we must connect with the audience—even though the expected audience may differ from the actual audience. So here are some ways to tailor your speech for when your audience changes:

1. **Look at the audience, and make an assessment given their body language.** If they seem excited, then you may go into detail about your project. If they are bored, then you may want to shorten the excess details, and stick to the main points.
2. **Remember to greet the audience, and jot down a few names, along with the individual interests.** You can use this information to connect to the audience and make them feel valued and respected.
3. **Take the time to listen to the audience's comments.** For example, if you are speaking to a predominately white male audience, number 1, don't assume that they share your point-of-view and 2, don't feel that you cannot persuade them to see your perspective. Rather, draw the audience in your speech by relating their comments to the key points of your presentation.
4. **Remember that you are prepared.** Do not doubt yourself. Chances are that the audience sees you as an expert in your field, and they want to see this topic from your point-of-view. Otherwise, they would not have bothered to take time to listen to you. Remember that you are a confident leader, so always carry yourself in a professional and polished manner.

“...We must connect with the audience—even though the expected audience may differ from the actual audience.”

You may not make large changes, but tailoring your speech can limit ambiguity, and bring brevity that makes a good speech, an excellent speech. When delivering a speech, your word selection influences your audience's response.

As for my speech given at the conference, I was able to succeed by keeping my uniqueness, but still touching the audience. Within a matter of moments, the audience was sold on the idea of the company. The speech gave the individuals in the audience, confidence in the plans I presented. Even after the speech, a cluster of supervisors formed groups to discuss the presentation. My supervisor was pleased, and I spoke fervently without isolate anyone. I still kept my style of speaking by tailoring my speech in order to convey my message to my audience. With these suggestions, I hope that you will do the same.

Why I entered the Contest?

Susan Holliday, 1st Place Winner of the 5th Annual Persuasive Speech Contest

I entered the Persuasive Speech Contest because I want to include Public Speaking as a facet of my future career plans and this contest was a way to get some valuable experience. In my previous work experience I have seen the value of being able to clearly state ideas and persuade someone to listen to me. The contest definitely challenges participants to be focused, concise and make a persuasive argument. I love a challenge; why else would I be at Agnes Scott College? Thank you for the opportunity.



Susan Holliday

Kate Heidbrink, 2nd Place Winner of the 5th Annual Persuasive Speech Contest

I entered the speech contest to practice my in-class persuasive speech ahead of time and inform Scotties about adoption rights. Also, I want to become a better public speaker to prepare for law school and other leadership positions. Although it took some time to prepare, I would recommend entering the spring informative speech contest to anyone who wanted to improve her speech skills.



Kate Heidbrink

Celeste Fredericks, 3rd Place Winner of the 5th Annual Persuasive Speech Contest

I entered the contest because I was passionate about my subject and wanted to make my audience aware of the issue. [Plus], I wanted them to realize that NASA is still important in today's world.



Celeste Fredericks

The Speakers of Distinction

Every first Monday of the month at six o'clock, the Speaking Center along with students and faculty meet for the Speakers of Distinction. In a cozy setting, participants are able to give short speeches, while listening to the tutors give presentations. Through praise and constructive criticism, many leave feeling more confident and skillful. During the month of October, we were graced with various speeches including an interesting one by Chaplain Wilson. So if you would like practice job interviews, oral presentations, or just for fun, then join us at the Speakers of Distinction. The next two dates are November 3rd and December 1st. For more information call 6915.

2003-2004 Workshops

- Nov. 3rd, Dec. 1st: 6:00 pm The Speakers of Distinction Workshops.
- Feb. 2nd, March 1st, April 5th, and May 3rd: The Speakers of Distinction Workshops
- Feb. 9th: 10:00 am Great Speeches by Great Americans: Black History Month Celebration
- Feb. 11th: 10:00 am Information meeting for Spring Informative Speech Contest
- March 26th: 3:00 pm Spring Informative Speech Contest
- March 29th: 7:30 pm SpARC Presentation Workshop.

All events, unless otherwise noted, take place in the Speaking Center, McCain Library, G-37. Seating is limited. Call extension 5371 and reserve your space for these events.

Speaking Center of Agnes Scott College

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Fall 2003 Tutoring Schedule

Monday

3:00-4:00 Jenny Wiese
5:00-6:00 Crystal Pough
7:00-8:30 Tara Bech

Tuesday

11:00-12:00 Sonal Chaddha
2:00-3:30 Veronica Henson-Phillips, Jenny Wiese
3:30-4:00 Veronica Henson-Phillips
5:00-6:00 Crystal Pough

Wednesday

3:00-4:00 Sonal Chaddha
5:00-6:00 Crystal Pough
7:00-8:30 Tara Bech

Thursdays

2:00-3:30 Veronica Henson-Phillips, Jenny Wiese
3:30-4:00 Veronica Henson-Phillips
9:00-10:00 Sonal Chaddha

Sunday

8:00-9:00 Jenny Wiese

Welcome to the Speaking Center.

We at the Speaking Center of Agnes Scott special in assisting the campus to improve and develop good communication skills. We encourage students, faculty and staff to schedule an appointment with our trained tutors to work on any of the following.

- Improving presentations and/or visual aides
- Strengthening delivery skills—especially in the area of oral presentation (such as poetry)
- Reducing accents
- Improving articulation/word pronunciation
- Providing good workshops that allow you to experience guest speakers

This year, the Speaking Center is looking forward to introducing exciting programs and events. We look forward to seeing you there!

Meet the 2003-2004 Speaking Center Tutors

Sonal Chaddha is an international student from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. She is a sophomore, Business/Economics and Psychology double major. Her aim is to make the most of her opportunities at Agnes Scott College. She enjoys public speaking and loves to help others who have reservations about addressing a crowd, like the ones she had, once upon a time.

Jenny Wiese is a junior, Economics major, from Orlando, Florida. As a veteran tutor, she is looking forward to assisting others with speaking-related issues. She is also very excited about the Speaking Center's new Program *Speakers of Distinction* because it will provide her with the opportunity to help others with their speaking as well as herself.

Crystal Pough is a senior majoring in English. She has excelled in Henson-Phillips "Public Speaking" class and is an advocate of hardy presentations. In addition, she has utilized her skills in various positions ranging from a governmental internship, as well as a public relations position with a community center.

Tara Bech, a sophomore Psychology Major (Dance Minor) is from St. Petersburg, Florida. This is her first year as a tutor for the speaking center and she cannot believe how far she has come this year. While in high school, Tara claims that she "could barely open my mouth to answer a question in class" but then she decided to participate in the persuasive speaking contest and with the help of the tutors I won first place!!! She is very excited about this upcoming year and she can't wait to begin!!!



(l to r) Sonal Chaddha, Jenny Wiese,
Crystal Pough, Tara Bech