Faculty Biographies

**Nina Browner, MD** is the Associate Professor of Neurology at the University of North Carolina and Director of the Parkinson’s Foundation Center of Excellence at University of North Carolina. After graduating from the Moscow Medical Academy, Russia she received prestigious Research Presidential Scholarship of the Russian Federation and spent two years at Johns Hopkins University doing research in functional MRI in Parkinson’s disease. She then continued her training with Neurology Residency at the Cleveland Clinic Foundations and a fellowship in Movement Disorders with Dr. Stanley Fahn at the Columbia University Medical Center. Dr. Browner divides her time between patient care and research. Her research interests include gait abnormalities in patients with Parkinson’s disease and cognitive changes on different stages of Parkinson’s disease. In addition to her dual roles of clinician and researcher, Dr. Browner mentors medical students and neurology residents as Neurology Residency Program director and had been awarded Collin Hall Award in Teaching Excellence from the Department of Neurology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

**Lori Campbell, MA, CCC-SLP** holds a degree from Berklee College of Music and began her career singing jingles for television and radio. Her experience as a vocalist and voice teacher sparked her interest in Speech-Language Pathology. She earned her Master’s Degree in Speech Language at California State University Los Angeles with a special interest in voice disorders. She received Allied Team Training for Parkinson’s in 2013, which helped her earn recognition as a clinical specialist in Neurophysiology and Neurogenic Speech and Language disorders by Citrus Valley Health Partners/East San Gabriel Valley Hospitals. She promotes health and wellness through creativity and shares her projects and journey living with Parkinson’s through her website and YouTube channels. WPC2016 Video Competition awarded her short film, VICTORY, Grand Prize at the Portland Congress! She lives in Southern California with her husband and has two grown daughters.

“Diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease at the age of 45 was devastating. I found myself fearful of the future and unclear of what to do next. Perseverance to seek out the doctors and a team who could best help me, allowed me to retool and achieve daily victories over my PD symptoms. I hope what I share will inspire you to refine your own skills with renewed confidence and determination to help as many people as possible living with PD experience their own daily victories.”

**Michelle R. Ciucci, PhD, CCC-SLP** studies Parkinson disease to examine the impact of early sensorimotor training approaches on functional improvement of vocalization and swallow behaviors as well as the underlying neural substrates of exercise-induced brain changes and explores how anti-Parkinson medications influence complex sensorimotor enrichment outcomes. Her research interests focus on the neurobiological and behavioral underpinnings of cranial sensorimotor control. Dr. Ciucci believes understanding these processes will lead to better treatments and functional outcomes for patients with Parkinson disease and other neurologic disorder.
Faculty Biographies cont.

Karen Hegland, PhD, CCC-SLP has research interests focusing on mechanisms of normal and disordered airway protection. These mechanisms include sensorimotor aspects of swallowing and cough. The primary research methods employed by her laboratory include reflex cough testing, aerodynamic cough analysis, videofluoroscopic swallow evaluation, laryngoscopy, and respiratory load magnitude estimation. Current research protocols seek to enroll participants with neurodegenerative disease, such as Parkinson’s disease, patients who have had a stroke, patients with certain voice disorders, and healthy older adults.

Jessica Huber, PhD, CCC-SLP has a research program to develop a theoretical account of the multiple factors that influence speech production and cognitive change in individuals with Parkinson’s disease (PD) and to translate findings to clinical treatment resulting in improvements in everyday communication environments. Dr. Huber’s research is funded by the National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. She has published a number of research and clinically focused papers in a variety of journals. Dr. Huber is the inventor of a small wearable device, the SpeechVive device, to treat communication impairments in people with PD. The device elicits the Lombard effect which can be exploited to improve speech clarity in individuals with PD while bypassing impairments known to occur in cognitive and sensory systems.

Leslie Mahler PhD, CCC-SLP has over 30 years of clinical experience working primarily with adults with neurological disorders prior to joining the faculty at URI. Dr. Mahler is actively involved in clinical research at URI investigating the efficacy of voice, speech and swallow treatment in Parkinson’s disease, stroke and Down syndrome and has made numerous presentations at national and international conferences. She is a certified clinician in the LSVT<sup>®</sup>LOUD, an efficacious treatment approach for improving voice and speech function for people with Parkinson disease. She is also the principal investigator on a multidisciplinary research project with Nutrition and Food Science and Kinesiology examining longitudinal changes in people with chronic neurological diagnoses such as acquired brain injury, stroke and Parkinson disease.