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# The International DYSLEXIA Association

Northern Ohio Branch  
Formerly The Orton Dyslexia Society

# NEWSLETTER

February 2012

## Legislative Update

by Charlotte Andrist, Central Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia Association (COBIDA) President

House Bills (HB) 96 and 157 were unanimously passed by the Ohio Senate with a subsequent unanimous concurrence vote in the Ohio House during a late night, end of the year Statehouse session on December 14. Both bills were signed into law by Governor Kasich on December 21.



Governor Kasich signs the Ohio Dyslexia Law surrounded by legislators, members of the Ohio branches of IDA, and other supporters.

### House Bill 96 (Celeste - D & Brenner - R)

This law will:

1) place the IDA definition of dyslexia directly into Ohio the Ohio Revised Code. Although the term "dyslexia" is currently listed as a specific learning disability within the 2008 Ohio Special Education Operating Standards, Ohio law does not contain a definition of dyslexia; and

2) begin a 3-year pilot program for the early identification and remediation of students at-risk for dyslexia and other phonologically based reading disorders.

### HB 157 (Schuring - R & Letson - D)

This law will:

1) define a dyslexia specialist as someone who has achieved training consistent with the Level II IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards; and

Continued on page 3



# Letter from The President

By Larry Orrach, M.Ed., President of NOBIDA

Greetings,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2012. I trust you had an enjoyable holiday season and you are looking forward to another year of progress in our efforts for universal literacy.

This past year, 2011, was a watershed year for efforts to improve reading instruction and achievement for students in Ohio. Two bills moved through the legislature and were signed by the governor just before the end of the year. Many thanks go to Stephanie Gordon, Rebecca Tolson, and Pam Kanfer from NOBIDA, who spearheaded this effort along with representatives from the Central Ohio and Ohio Valley branches. Thanks are also extended to the many people who drove to Columbus to provide testimony to the legislature highlighting the need to provide help to children across Ohio who struggle to learn to read.

The first law, H.B. 96, places Dyslexia in the Ohio statutes and establishes dyslexia as a qualification for special education services. Finally, in Ohio, we have official recognition of the major cause of reading problems for children. The law sets up a pilot project to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness of an early reading assistance program for children with dyslexia. The partnership includes the Ohio Library Council, the state Superintendent, the International Dyslexia Association or any other nationally recognized organization that specializes in issues surrounding dyslexia, and will develop an early screening procedure for pre-school aged children and an intervention program. The state Superintendent is authorized to select participating districts and libraries to develop early screening procedures for pre-school age children. This is the first step toward having all pre-school children screened for reading problems before they go to school and

begin to experience difficulties and frustration. The second law, H.B. 157, promotes professional development for teachers in Ohio, to better equip them to teach reading to students who have dyslexia and other reading problems. Through programs sponsored by state Educational Service Centers or school districts, teachers will be exposed to the research based practices that are effective for helping all children learn to read, especially those children who struggle with the teaching methods presently used in many schools.

Another effort to improve reading instruction began last year in Ohio. Working with representatives from the three Ohio Branches of IDA and several state universities, the Ohio Board of Regents is seeking to infuse standards from the recently developed IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards into a preservice teacher education program. These standards will guide university teacher education programs to prepare teachers to use the practices that research has shown are effective for teaching children to read. The Board of Regents will use the revised teacher education standards when it reviews teacher preparation programs at the state universities. Again, thanks go to Stephanie Gordon, Pam Kanfer, MaryHeather Munger, and Rebecca Tolson for their leadership with this initiative.

This year, 2012, promises to be filled with many more important steps for IDA and NOBIDA. First, I am happy to report that the IDA national office, after several difficult financial years, had a positive budget balance last year. Fundraising efforts have produced very positive results. Very strong attendance at this year's national conference was a major help toward this positive balance. The Chicago conference was as good, or better, than always, perhaps reflecting the renewed financial position of the organization. The conference had an upbeat feel to it and a sense of a renewed relationship between national headquarters and the branches.

With financial health intact, IDA can focus upon its strategic plan. One of the major initiatives at national headquarters is increased membership among parents of children with dyslexia. To invite more parents to join IDA, annual membership fees for parents have been lowered to only \$45 per year. As a benefit of membership, IDA's website has a unique section for parents. At the 2012 national conference in Baltimore, IDA will host its first parent-focused conference. Look for education, networking, and socialization opportunities. Please share the news of the reduced membership fee and increased benefits with parents you know who would be interested.

IDA and NOBIDA will focus on professional development for educators as required by H.B. 157. Workshops will bring the new IDA Knowledge and Practice Standards to classrooms across Ohio. To ensure uniform quality, representatives from the three Ohio IDA branches will meet to develop a syllabus to guide the professional development. The legislation requires that workshops be delivered by competent instructors who are dyslexia specialists. A workshop for school administrators is also being developed so that school leaders understand the standards and can guide their teachers toward improvements in teaching reading.

A new fund-raising event was initiated by NOBIDA in October at Lawrence School. Under the direction of Courtney Baker and Mary Jo O'Neill, the first annual NOBIDA Dyslexia Dash was held. Most importantly, the Dash, along with our annual simulation program led by Ellen Brick, "Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic," was part of our Dyslexia Awareness campaign for October. About a hundred runners shared in the promotion of dyslexia awareness as they raced through the communities around Lawrence School. Mark your calendar for October 21, 2012 for this year's dyslexia dash. Even if you don't participate as a runner or walker, I hope you are able to join the festivities or help out as a donor, sponsor, or volunteer.

Lastly, our annual symposium is coming up soon. Mark your calendar for March 9.

We will be at the Bertram Inn in Aurora for another outstanding program. I have had several opportunities to talk with our keynote speaker, Gordon Sherman. I am fascinated and awed by his intelligence and vision. Having heard him speak at recent national conferences, I know he will get this year's symposium

off to a wonderful start that will be complemented by break-out sessions throughout the day. Grab a colleague, friend, or someone you know who is affected by dyslexia and bring them to this truly important event.

Have a wonderful and productive 2012,

Larry Orrach



## Legislative Update

*Continued from page 1*

2) give Educational Service Centers (Ohio's statewide network of inservice training facilities) and other educational institutions permissive authority to hire a dyslexia specialist to provide professional development in dyslexia for Ohio teachers grades K-4.

Thank you, Representatives Ted Celeste and Andrew Brenner!!!

Thank you, Representatives Kirk Shuring and Tom Letson!!!

Thanks to your aides who so patiently advised us, directed us, and kept us on course!

Thank you for taking on the task of pushing....advocating....supporting dyslexia legislation in the House and the Senate. You went beyond the call of duty!!!

Thanks to the members of the House and Senate Education Committees who listened to the testimonials from professionals, parents, students, and adults with dyslexia.

And....after listening...you took action and passed both H.B. 96 and 157 unanimously!

Thanks to the members of the House of Representatives and Senate for overwhelmingly passing both bills.

Thanks to those who gave testimony.... both in writing and in person.

Thanks to those who organized and



*Left to right: Legislators responsible for the passage of the dyslexia law: Reps. Ted Celeste, Andrew Brenner, Kirk Schuring, and Tom Letson*

signed petitions.

Thanks to those who wrote and sent their "stories" to the legislators.

Thanks to those who attended the Rallies.

Thanks to all Ohioans who contacted their legislators concerning dyslexia and advocated for the support of these two bills. Without your voice the passage of these bills would not have occurred!!!

Thanks to the Executive Committee of the Ohio Dyslexia Group for the many meetings, conference calls, trips to Columbus, and time spent planning the strategy, gathering testimony, and calling witnesses!

On behalf of people with dyslexia, their families, and all who support them, Thank You!!!

Thank you from the Executive Committee of the Ohio Dyslexia Group, Charlotte Andrist, Martha Chiodi, Stephanie Gordon, Pam Kanfer, Janis Mitchell, Susan Nolan, and Rebecca Tolson.

Remember to thank your legislators for this wonderful holiday gift!

To learn more about these bills, go to these links:

**HB 96 (Celeste - D & Brenner - R)**

House Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=131130&startTime=1299&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=131130&startTime=1299&autoStart=True)

Senate Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133922&startTime=2012&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133922&startTime=2012&autoStart=True)

House Concurrence Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133924&startTime=5867&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133924&startTime=5867&autoStart=True)

**HB 157 (Schuring - R & Letson - D)**

House Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=131673&startTime=9547&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=131673&startTime=9547&autoStart=True)

Senate Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133902&startTime=2540&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133902&startTime=2540&autoStart=True)

House Concurrence Vote: [www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133924&startTime=3732&autoStart=True](http://www.ohiochannel.org/MediaLibrary/Media.aspx?fileId=133924&startTime=3732&autoStart=True) ■





# Dyslexia Recognized Through Team Effort

By Stephanie Gordon, M.A., and Pam Kanfer, M.S., NOBIDA Advisory Council Members, Legislative Committee

In 2008, at the IDA national conference in Seattle, members of the three Ohio branches learned that politics and money were the keys to passing a dyslexia law in Texas. The Ohio group discussed the possibilities and we agreed to “give it a try.”

At our first meeting in Columbus the following April, we learned that politics was already addressed by entrepreneurs Janis Mitchell and Michael Morris, who had secured Representative Ted Celeste (D) to sponsor an Ohio dyslexia

bill. Inspired, we formed the Legislative Executive Committee, with Charlotte Andrist and Janis Mitchell representing Central Ohio (COBIDA), Martha Chiodi and Anita Gardner representing Ohio Valley (OVBIDA), and Stephanie Gordon and Pam Kanfer representing Northern Ohio (NOBIDA). We committed to bi-monthly meetings in Columbus or conference calls. Team effort soon expanded as Rebecca Tolson from NOBIDA and more representatives from the other two branches joined the committee. We immediately began to work on a wish list for the legislation.

Knowing that no new money would be approved, Rep. Ted Celeste (D) called a meeting in mid-May to inform us that the Ohio Library Council had funds to underwrite a pilot project for the assessment of pre-school children.

Library staff would facilitate the intervention program. The library project was part of a bill that would amend an Ohio statute by adding dyslexia as a specific learning disability. It was pivotal that the word “dyslexia” would be used.

Along with Celeste, Rep. Andy Brenner (R) agreed to co-sponsor a house bill. Bipartisan House Bill 572 was introduced in late May and sent to the House Education Committee. H.B. 572 was

short lived, due to summer recess and the election year. However, our team efforts intensified. We used social media to connect with Ohioans, the Ohio Dyslexia Group on Facebook. We recruited people willing to tell their

stories and connect with legislators. We compiled statistics and sources and prepared talking points for Ohioans to use when meeting with legislators. We distributed petitions to show our legislators that we had grass roots support. In October 2009, we held our first Ohio Dyslexia Rally on the south lawn of the Statehouse.

Our team efforts paid off. A second Ohio Dyslexia rally was held in October 2010. In January 2011, H.B. 572 was reintroduced into the House as H.B. 96 and was sent to the House Education Committee. Hearings, heard at the discretion of the chair, extended over the winter and spring months. Professional testimony educated the House Education Committee. Emotional testimonials were given by colleagues Rep. Tom Letson (D) and Chancellor Jim Petro (R),

who both are persons with dyslexia. Parents, adults, and students described their heart-wrenching stories. H.B. 96 passed the House Education Committee unanimously in May, passed the House only one vote shy of unanimously, and then sat in the Senate over summer break. Political and public support expanded through team effort. We planned our third Ohio Dyslexia Rally for October 2011 and celebrated Rep. Andy Brenner’s efforts to declare October Dyslexia Month in Ohio.

In September, Senate Education Committee hearings on H.B. 96 began under the chairmanship of Sen. Peggy Lehner (R). The challenge again was educating the members intellectually and reaching them emotionally. Success was around the corner once Sen. Lehner voluntarily wrote a clarifying amendment, but this meant that after H.B. 96 passed the Senate Education Committee and the Senate, it had to go back to the House floor for a vote on the newly amended wording of H.B. 96.

“Our legislative representatives performed a miracle... The Senate Education Committee unanimously passed H.B. 96 and sent it to the Senate.”

Our legislative representatives performed a miracle. Only two days of sessions remained before the Senate and House

adjourned at the end of 2011. The Senate Education Committee unanimously passed H.B. 96 and sent it to the Senate. Later that same day, the Senate unanimously passed the bill. H.B. 96 was whisked to the floor of the House. The next day, we sat in the gallery and watched as one representative after the other voted “yes.” What an emotional experience!

Teammates, we made history, but our work has just begun. Now the laws must be realized in Ohio schools and work places. Let’s keep expanding our team effort to educate Ohioans that Ohio statute recognizes dyslexia as a specific learning disability. The new laws define dyslexia, provide for early assessment and intervention, and encourage teachers to receive training in how to teach students with dyslexia. ■



Governor Kasich with Rachel Near, aide to Rep. Schuring, left, and Rebecca Tolson of the NOBIDA board

## You Can Make a Difference Too! The Story of How an Ohio Dyslexia Law was Born

By Rebecca Tolson, M.Ed., CALT, NOBIDA Board Treasurer

How does one go about creating a law? I simply took the NOBIDA legislative committee’s challenge and met with my local legislators. Representative Kirk Schuring responded to my request. While sitting together at a local coffee shop, prepared to discuss dyslexia, I surprisingly discovered his passion for helping children. He knew about the Masonic Learning Centers and believed in the Orton-Gillingham methodology. He became interested in my collaboration with the Stark County Educational Service Center (ESC) and then designed a way that our committee could move forward during these tough economic times for education.

Many individuals worked on writing, editing, and refining House Bill 157, which is modeled after the dyslexia professional development trainings

sponsored by the Stark County ESC. The workshops attracted numerous administrators, teachers, tutors, speech-language pathologists, psychologists, and others. Their hunger for research, assessment information, and strategies for struggling readers prompted further workshops. Rep. Schuring duplicated this program across the state through the support of the other 59 ESCs.

I would like to thank the many supporters who contributed to HB 157 passing unanimously. Many of you submitted written testimony, gave oral testimony, lobbied at the statehouse, wrote letters, sent e-mails, and called legislators. I especially thank the NOBIDA committee members, Stephanie Gordon and Pam Kanfer, for the many, many trips we shared to Columbus. All of your support contributed to the governor signing House Bill 157 on December 21, 2011.

It has been ten years since the first



Testimony at the Ohio statehouse. Rep. Celeste, at left, looks on.

dyslexia bill was introduced in Ohio, but the future looks bright. As we move forward with two Ohio laws, the focus is on implementation of professional development and early screening. Most importantly, those that benefit the most, individuals with dyslexia, can be proud of our state for its decision to let research guide its path. You can be assured that the Ohio Dyslexia Group will continue its efforts toward further legislation. ■





Dyslexia's 24th Annual NOBIDA Symposium:

# DYSLEXIA, DIVERSITY & THE FUTURE

March 8 - 9, 2012

## NOBIDA's 2012 Symposium to Feature Gordon Sherman

Who is Gordon Sherman?

Gordon F. Sherman, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of the Newgrange School and Educational Outreach Center in Mercer County, NJ. Before joining Newgrange, he was director of the Dyslexia Research Laboratory at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Boston, and an assistant professor of neurology (neurosciences) at Harvard Medical School. Dr. Sherman is an IDA past president.

Sherman received his Ph.D. in developmental psychobiology from the University of Connecticut in 1980 and has over twenty-five years of research experience related to the development of the brain the understanding of developmental dyslexia. He is the author and editor of over 65 scientific articles, reviews, and books. He speaks nationally and internationally to parents and teachers about the implications of brain research for pedagogy, with an emphasis on dyslexia and other diverse learning styles.

The following is an edited version of

an interview with Gordon Sherman found at SchwabLearning.org.

[Schwablearning.org](http://Schwablearning.org) (SCHWAB):

As a neuroscientist and an educator, what is your vision of dyslexia? What key points should we understand?

**Gordon Sherman (GS) Answers:**

Four points are crucial.

Let's examine each of these points. My perspective may surprise you.

### 1. The brains of people with dyslexia are different

Decades of research show people with dyslexia have brains that are structured differently, function differently, and learn differently. Dyslexia begins with a complex gene-environment interaction that initiates developmental changes in the nervous system before birth. The result is an atypically organized brain that processes information in unique ways.

Microscopic analyses of the brains of individuals with dyslexia show structural variations in left-hemisphere language networks, symmetry between the left and right hemispheres, and, sometimes, changes in sensory systems. Neuroimaging studies support microscopic analyses and show characteristic and distinct functional differences – less engagement of left-hemisphere language areas and more bilateral processing.

Finally, educational research catalogues a number of distinctive learning differences among individuals with dyslexia, chief among them are language-system difficulties – weaknesses in phonological processing (producing/interpreting language sound patterns) and difficulties learning alphabetic skills (written symbols representing speech). These learning deficits set the stage for problems learning academic skills, which often lead to negative educational, emotional, and social consequences.

It is important to remember, though, that even with the consistency of findings about structural, functional,

and learning differences, people with dyslexia are a diverse group. Dyslexia varies from individual to individual in the combination and degree of strengths and weaknesses due to the intricacies of brain development and countless environmental variables. These factors and overall cognitive capacity influence a person's ability to compensate for dyslexia. And, yes, people with dyslexia can overcome its "disabling" effects. While dyslexia is brain-based and life-long, it is amenable to educational intervention.

### 2. We can design educational environments to prevent or diminish learning disabilities and to elicit strengths



Gordon Sherman, 2012 Speaker

Environmental variables play a key role in dyslexia. The educational environment can translate a distinct learning difference into a profound learning disability or it can offset neural weaknesses and encourage latent strengths to blossom into competencies and talents. Neuroimaging studies show that brain functioning in subjects with dyslexia can change in response to structured-language intervention, functioning more like the brains of non-impaired readers. This adds further weight to decades of educational research demonstrating that effective early instruction can prevent and diminish reading disabilities in children with dyslexia and forestall associated academic problems. Good news, particularly since structured-language instruction also benefits most learners!

### 3. There may be a connection between dyslexia and certain abilities

Having dyslexia does not preclude having strengths and exceptional abilities. In fact, people with dyslexia sometimes are gifted and accomplished. But are they

gifted and accomplished in spite of their dyslexia or because of it?

Many experts in learning disabilities (Rawson, Vail, West) have written about hidden strengths in dyslexia that blossom into gifts and result in great achievements. Educators often mention remarkable abilities outside the language domain in their dyslexic students. None of this is scientific evidence, but it prompts intriguing questions.

Only rigorous scientific exploration can establish any connection between certain talents and dyslexia. Thus far, evidence supporting any dyslexia-talent connection has proven elusive – with a few

fascinating exceptions. A series of studies explored the hypothesized spatial strengths in dyslexia. In batteries of tests designed to reveal such abilities, subjects with dyslexia did no better than controls and often did worse. However, in two studies, dyslexics performed a particular task (the Impossible Figures Test) just as accurately as controls, but **faster!**

Why? This task requires subjects to evaluate whether or not a particular configuration actually can exist. Do dyslexics perform more efficiently on this task because their brains process information more globally? Are there advantages to this mode of cognitive function? In this task at least, a global strategy may be better than a sequential, linear one.

### 4. The toughest challenge in teaching students with dyslexia may be a product of the mind, not the brain.

Many mysteries surround dyslexia, but there are no mysteries about what constitutes effective instruction for those at risk for reading failure. We now know what it takes to "outwit nature."

Effective methods for teaching reading and writing skills to children and adults with dyslexia do exist and incorporate several distinguishing features. These methods deliver a structured-language curriculum in a sequential, systematic, and cumulative way through a multisensory approach – offsetting language, sensory, memory, and motor/attention processing differences. Indeed reading research tells us that effective early literacy instruction for **all** children includes most of these elements. Such instruction embodies the principles of "universal design for learning," making curriculum accessible for all learners.

Research also tells us that effective early screening and intervention can prevent or diminish reading disabilities in children whose brain design predisposes them for reading difficulties. Imagine preventing reading failure in children with dyslexia! Reading failure has been dyslexia's most singular defining characteristic.

Unfortunately, circulating scientific evidence about what constitutes sound instruction is not enough to ensure children will receive it. Understanding the dynamics of school change and imparting essential competencies to teachers are among the conditions necessary for implementing effective research-based instruction for diverse learners. Time, money, and attitudes pose formidable barriers in fulfilling these conditions.

As a neuroscientist and an educator, I believe our toughest learning challenge is a product of the mind, not the brain. **We can and must** strive to identify and nurture strengths in children with dyslexia. ■





## 62nd Annual IDA National Conference: Chicago, November 9-12, 2011: Session Reviews



# Who Are We???

by Lori Josephson, M.A., NOBIDA Advisory Council Member

Once again, the 62nd Annual International Dyslexia Association Conference did not disappoint its participants. Particularly noteworthy was the message of Maryanne Wolf, the recipient of the Samuel T. Orton Award. Dr. Wolf was invited to deliver the annual Samuel T. Orton lecture on Thursday morning. Dr. Wolf is a "one woman show," who inspired and informed the crowd with her knowledge base, enthusiasm, and inspirational thinking.

Let me begin with the end of her lecture: "Who are we?" Dr. Wolf virtually issued a "call to arms" to all educators, speech-language pathologists, researchers, parents of individuals with dyslexia, and individuals with dyslexia to work together to further the mission of educating those with dyslexia optimally, as well as to increase awareness of dyslexia in the coming years. It is her thought that the "technological revolution" will assist those with dyslexia in terms of altering brain structure to their benefit.

Dr. Wolf reiterated the many facets involved in skilled reading, with the primary end result of a human being having the ability to think deeply after having deciphered those squiggles on a page which translate into thought. She highlighted the mnemonic "POSSM" when referring to her language model, which is comprised of Phonemes (the

smallest units of speech), Orthographic Parts of Language (letters, letter patterns, common words, etc.), Semantic Meanings of Words (vocabulary, polysemy, semantic neighborhoods, word consciousness, etc.), Syntactic Uses of Words (word order, grammar), and Morphemes (meaning portions of words). Most of us are unaware that approximately 35-40% of words in the English language are polysemous, meaning that they have more than one meaning. Unbelievable...no wonder learning to be a proficient reading and writer takes many years of practice, even when one does not have dyslexia. Dr. Wolf also noted the importance of variance in processing speed in terms of the variance in the development of literacy skills at the phoneme and linguistic levels. Lots to think about...

One thing is for sure: "The more a person knows about a word, the faster that person will read and comprehend it...and most importantly, the brain of that person changes with every word."

I have read Dr. Wolf's book, *Proust and the Squid*, which discusses many of the aforementioned ideas in greater detail; I recommend it for winter reading. Become part of Dr. Wolf's "we" by assisting and supporting individuals with dyslexia. ■

## Active Student Engagement:

### The Key to Effective Instruction

Presentation by Lisa Drumond and Marty Hougen, The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk

by Sr. Marcia Kiser, M.Ed., NOBIDA Advisory Council Member

This duo presentation was both enriching and practical. Lisa and Marty spent several minutes stressing the importance of the five critical components of reading instruction (phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) before explaining and demonstrating five features of effective instruction, the main component of their talk:

- Explicit instruction with modeling "to make the invisible visible." Follow the pattern: I do, we do, we do, we do, you do.
- Systematic instruction with scaffolding, simple to more complex.
- Multiple opportunities for practice, demonstrating a variety of ways to respond to questions, as solo or whole class responses.
- Immediate affirmative and corrective feedback focusing on the correct answer repeated several times.
- Ongoing progress monitoring through informal notes, observations, and quick individual assessments.

Twenty activities were presented to engage students. Books they recommended are Explicit Instruction by Archer, Slant by Ellis, Teach Like A Champion by Lemov, and Teaching Word Recognition by O'Connor. ■

## Save the Date! 63rd Annual IDA Conference

October 24-27, 2012  
Baltimore, MD  
The Baltimore Convention Center



# Dyslexia Dash 5K Rewards Runners of all Speeds and Abilities

By Courtney Baker, NOBIDA Board Member

Many thanks to all who ran, walked, and supported the inaugural Dyslexia Dash at Lawrence School on Sunday, October 23, 2011! It was a beautiful, sunny day in northeast Ohio and over 200 participants toed the line for one of three events: the 1-Mile Family Fun Walk, the 5k race, and the 5k Prediction Run.

A total of 13 teams registered for the School Team Challenge. The winning team was Team George, running on behalf of St. Barnabas in Brecksville. St. Barnabas received a \$500 scholarship for their Learning Services department, TextHelp Read&Write Gold software, and a 1-year subscription to Learning Ally. Four additional teams received TextHelp Read&Write Gold software and a 1-year subscription to Learning Ally. A special thanks to TextHelp and Learning Ally for making this School Team Challenge so rewarding!

The Prediction Run provided a unique twist on the standard 5k race. When runners registered, they were asked to predict their finishing time. The 10 runners who came closest to matching their actual finishing time to their

# Dyslexia Dash

Sunday, October 23, 2011  
Lawrence Upper School



predicted finishing time won Timex Ironman watches. Through the Prediction Run, participants were encouraged to put themselves in the shoes of a dyslexic and do their best without the tools we often take for granted. In a dyslexic person's case, this is the ability to read. For the runners, it was the ability to chart speed by wearing a watch or seeing a timing clock.

Traditional awards were given as well to top three male and female overall as well as top three in each age group. Runners from ages 6 to 69 participated!

Our tagline for this event was, "What would you give up to succeed?" and it is our hope that participants were able to walk away with not only a fun and unique experience, but with a better understanding of what children and adults with learning differences face every day.

Final results are available at [www.chaneyevents.com](http://www.chaneyevents.com). Photos from the event are available for viewing and purchase at [www.clevelandmotophoto.com](http://www.clevelandmotophoto.com). Thank you to Motophoto for capturing the day for us!

And please SAVE THE DATE for next year's Dash: Sunday, October 21, 2012. We hope to see you there!

To receive updates on the 2012 Dash, like us on facebook at [www.facebook.com/dyslexiadash](http://www.facebook.com/dyslexiadash).

Platinum Sponsor:  
Texthelp Read&Write GOLD

Silver Sponsors:  
The Lillian and Betty Ratner School, Learning Ally, MotoPhoto

Bronze Sponsors:  
Vertical Runner, Better Letters & Graphics, Bigfly Aviation, Buchmayr Crowley Associates, The College Planning Center, Pam Kanfer, Mary Lou McHenry – Howard Hanna Realtor, Notre Dame College, Fathead ■

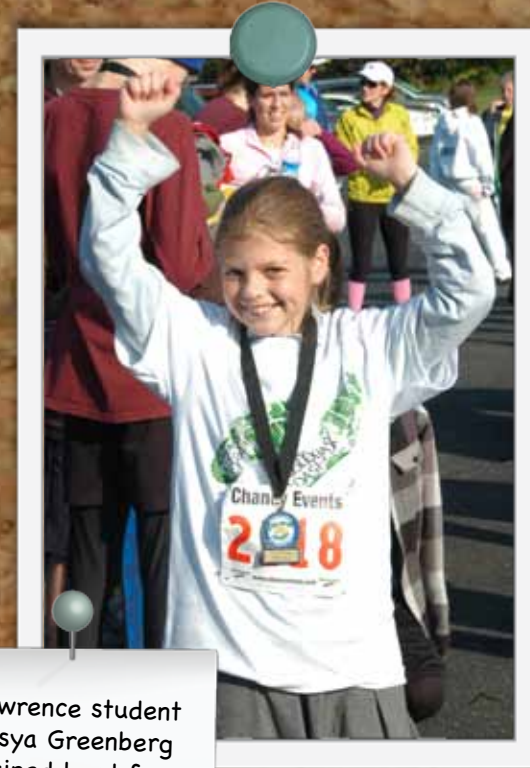




# 2011 Dyslexia Dash



Runners line up at the start of the 5k race



Lawrence student Basya Greenberg trained hard for her first 5k race... and placed 3rd in her age group!



Thank you to the sponsors of the Dyslexia Dash for all their support! We could not have done it without them!



Mark and Linda Sprenger and their two sons all ran the 5k. Congratulations to Ben and Alex for placing 2nd and 3rd in their age groups!



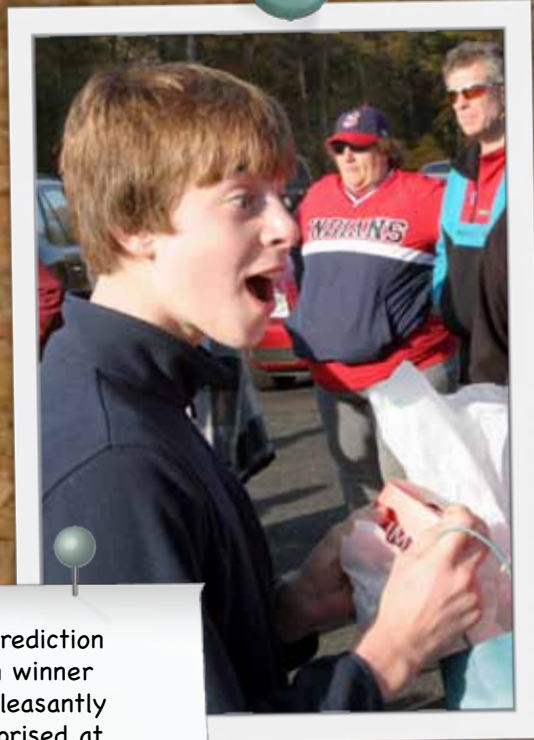
NOBIDA Board member Sam Crowley (pictured with her children Parker, Natalie, Brooks, and Campbell) led the 1-mile Fun Walk.



Dyslexia Dash 5k awards







A Prediction Run winner is pleasantly surprised at receiving a Timex Ironman watch!



Runners at the start of the Dyslexia Dash 5k



NOBIDA Treasurer Rebecca Tolson on her way to a strong finish - and first place in her age group!



Race Co-Directors Courtney Baker (left) and Mary Jo O'Neil with Lawrence School Athletic Director Ron Messer.



David Norris from TextHelp Read&Write Gold (left) with NOBIDA Board President, Larry Orrach



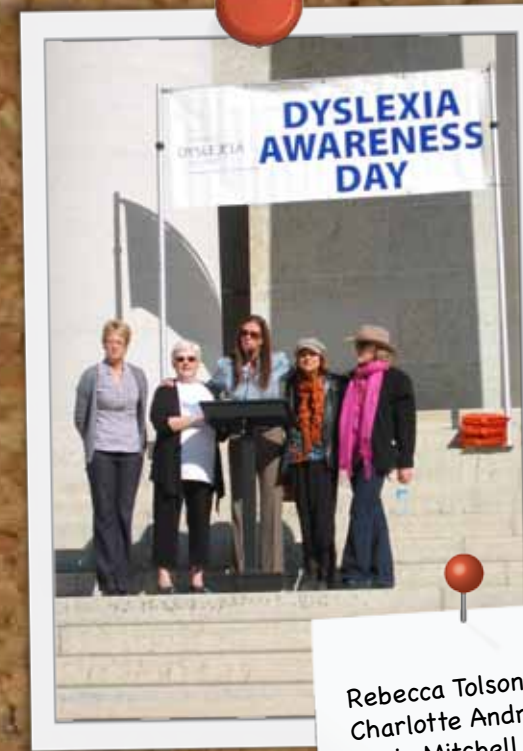
DYSLEXIA  
RALLY:  
OCTOBER 5, 2012



"Young Heirlooms"  
band with singer  
Kelly Fine, who  
has dyslexia, and  
guitarist Chris  
Robinson



Olive O'Rourke  
Scherf with Rep.  
Ted Celeste



Rebecca Tolson,  
Charlotte Andrist,  
Janis Mitchell,  
Stephanie Gordon,  
Pam Kanfer



Olive (left) and Shanny O'Rourke Scherf



NOBIDA Advisory Council Member Sister Marcia Kiser leads a dyslexia simulation in the Ohio statehouse.



At Podium: COBIDA  
President Charlotte  
Andrist, Business  
Entrepreneur Janis  
Mitchell, NOBIDA  
Legislative Committee  
Members Stephanie  
Gordon and Pam Kanfer



At the NOBIDA table, members Pam Kanfer,  
Rebecca Tolson, Stephanie Gordon,  
Tammy Alexander



# Dyslexia Rally III

By Stephanie Gordon, M.A., NOBIDA Advisory Council

"I want to be president of the United States," nine-year-old Olive O'Rourke Scherf announced from the microphone as we gathered at the steps of the South Lawn of the State House. Our Dyslexia Awareness Day banner rose behind her announcing our Third Ohio Dyslexia Rally.

It was October 5, 2011. The crisp early morning temperatures subsided with the rising sun and the enthusiasm of the crowd. Olive was dressed in a white short-sleeved T-shirt with the COBIDA Dyslexia Dash logo. Her hair was parted to the left, neatly pulled back in a ponytail, her eyes shining and determined. She held up her report card and proclaimed, "Got all A's!" Her mother, far from Olive's hearing range, said that Olive was still struggling to learn how to read, but was being tutored

in Orton-Gillingham and making progress.

Meanwhile, the mingling crowd was entertained by our favorite composer from Cincinnati, Kelly Fine, who has dyslexia, and her "Young Heirlooms" band. The crowd browsed through information set out on tables about dyslexia and House Bill 96 and House Bill 157. Marburn Academy, Learning Ally, Masonic Learning Center, and the Ohio Coalition for Education of Children with Learning Disabilities all had tables. Stephanie Gordon, Pam Kanfer, and Rebecca Tolson took turns manning the tables, which included IDA Information, Tell Your Story, and button and quilt-making, which were popular with the students.

Charlotte Andrist, President of COBIDA, warmly welcomed the crowd. The key speakers were Rep. Ted Celeste and Rep. Andy Brenner, co-sponsors of House

Bill 96, and Kurt Schuring, co-sponsor of House Bill 157. Entrepreneur Janis Mitchell and Rep. Tom Letson shared their own struggles with dyslexia while in school.

Charlotte then invited the crowd to a dyslexia simulation called "Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic," which NOBIDA Board Members Sister Marcia Kiser and Tammy Alexander conducted inside the statehouse. Rep. Celeste, who sat next to me during the simulation, said, "Wow! Now I have a better understanding of the struggles that a person with dyslexia has." Rep. Letson, sitting across from us, nodded his head.

Let's hope that some day leaders like Reps. Celeste, Brenner, Schuring, and Letson will be promoting dyslexia awareness with President O'Rourke Scherf. ■

## Branch Spotlight: New Executive Assistant: Nicole Herron

Nicole Herron was hired by NOBIDA in November 2011 to be the branch's Executive Assistant. She has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration in MIS from Kent State University and is a certified Project Manager. Her professional work experience includes managing teams of developers, analysts, and project leaders within Information Systems. Nicole has taught business education workshops and courses and was an adjunct professor in Information Systems at Lake Community College.

Nicole is originally from Massillon (Jackson Twp) although currently she lives in Painesville with her two daughters, ages 12 and 10, and her son, age 7. Nicole is engaged to be married in May 2012. Subsequently, she will be moving to Mentor to become the stepmom of three more children!

Nicole's oldest daughter was diagnosed with dyslexia in 2010, at the end of her 4th-grade year. Unfortunately, Nicole struggled for years before her school system recognized that something was wrong. Her bright 4th-grader was reading at only a 2nd-grade level. Nicole began a passionate pursuit of research and learning about education for students with learning disabilities. Her daughter began being tutored in Alphabetic Phonics by NOBIDA board member Vicki Krnac in the spring of 2010. Most recently, Nicole became involved in the push for dyslexia legislation by giving personal testimony to the Ohio State Legislature in support of HB 96 and HB 157. She is currently enrolled in the SMU Learning Therapy Program and is tutoring students one-to-one in Alphabetic Phonics as part of the required clinical teaching hours to earn CALT practitioner status in 2013. ■



Nicole Herron



NOBIDA Board Member Trish Harpring leads a dyslexia simulation.

### Walk in the Shoes of a Dyslexic: A Simulation Held at Laurel School, Shaker Heights, in October 2011

The NOBIDA Board can offer a simulation to your school or group. Contact Advisory Council member Ellen Brick at [ellenbrick@hotmail.com](mailto:ellenbrick@hotmail.com) ■

The next Dyslexia Simulation will be held on:

October 3rd, 2012

6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Orville Elementary School

605 Mineral Springs

Orville, OH 44667

## What's New in Education? Students with Visual and Learning Disabilities Thrive with Accessible Audiobooks from Learning Ally

By Doug Sprei, Media Relations Director, Learning Ally

**Learning Ally**   
Making reading accessible for all.

For students who are blind, visually impaired, or physically disabled or learning disabled, Learning Ally provides the nation's largest online audio library of core curriculum textbooks and literature titles – helping students achieve academic success and prepare for the workplace.

Founded in 1948 as Recording for the Blind (RFB), the organization's original mission was to enable blinded World War II veterans to attend college. Over time, RFB grew to serve many more people with learning differences such as dyslexia, and in the mid 1990s was renamed Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D). In 2011, RFB&D was transformed into Learning Ally – reflecting its mission to serve a complete spectrum of individuals for whom reading is a barrier to learning. Currently Learning Ally serves more than 300,000 K-12, college, and graduate students, as well as veterans and working professionals. Seventy-five percent of its members

have a learning disability such as dyslexia.

Produced in high-quality digital format, Learning Ally audiobooks can be accessed on mainstream devices including the Apple iPad and iPhone, MP3 players, Mac and PC computers, and CD. More than 6,000 volunteers nationwide help record and process the books, and thousands of new titles are added annually. Currently, the collection of more than 65,000 textbooks and literature offerings spans most major publishers for K-12 through post-graduate school.

Continued on page 18





The books provide extensive navigation, bookmarking and control features that are critical to successful studying. Students tap into the general education curriculum and stay on top of assignments in step with their peers. Countless educators and parents point to Learning Ally as a proven resource that relieves stress and saves time for students facing an overwhelming amount of reading and studying material, adding that young learners build confidence and self-esteem as their comprehension, performance, and grades improve.

Students with a certified print disability are eligible for Individual Membership at \$99 per year (just over \$8 per month), allowing them to work on assignments at home as a supplement to their school's membership.

Institutional Memberships are available for schools and districts to provide



accommodations for their students with IEP and 504 plans. Our customized programs can include memberships, equipment, training, and support. To learn more, visit [www.LearningAlly.org](http://www.LearningAlly.org) ■

## NOBIDA Scholarship Opportunities

### NOBIDA Stephanie Gordon Senior Scholarship

This scholarship is awarded in honor of a high school senior formally diagnosed with dyslexia who is a worthy role model for others; refuses to be limited by the challenges of learning differences; strives for excellence; chooses to live as an achiever; and enriches the lives of the families, friends, employers, and communities with whom he/she interacts.

The scholarship recipient will be awarded a cash prize of \$250 to support this student's postsecondary education endeavors and the recipient will have an opportunity to accept this award at the 24th Annual Dyslexia Pre-Symposium Dinner on Thursday evening, March 8, 2012 at the Bertram Inn in Aurora, Ohio. This award is given at the discretion of the Student Scholarship Committee of the NOBIDA.

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### NOBIDA Jean Armus Scholarship

NOBIDA is offering the Jean Armus Scholarship for the upcoming 24th Annual Dyslexia Symposium on Friday, March 9, 2012. The Jean Armus Scholarship will cover all or part of the symposium registration fee. All applicants will be considered except members of the NOBIDA Board.

Educators, parents of children with dyslexia, and college/university education students are encouraged to apply. Scholarships are available to persons who do not have another sponsor (such as an employer). Our goal is for applicants accepting this scholarship to agree, upon returning to the community, to pass on to local educators the important information gleaned from the symposium. In addition, we are hopeful that the recipient will join the IDA.

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## NOBIDA Stephanie Gordon Senior Scholarship

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Address (if different than above) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

High School \_\_\_\_\_

School Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

School Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

School E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Post Graduation Plans \_\_\_\_\_

Has this Nominee been diagnosed with dyslexia by a qualified professional? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Evaluator \_\_\_\_\_

Year Evaluated \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator's Address \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator's Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluator's Email \_\_\_\_\_

Does this Nominee receive special education services/accommodations? Please elaborate.

#### Nepotism Statement:

Applicants are required to identify any relation to current NOB/IDA Board Members. Students related may only receive a scholarship exclusively based on merit and achievement.

Are you related to an NOB/IDA Board Member? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please identify the Board Member and the relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Send the application with a statement in the medium of your choice which illustrates (1) the positive lessons you have learned from overcoming your learning obstacles and (2) how you have achieved balance in your life.

Media ideas include (but are not limited to):

- Video
- Song creation/performance
- Pictorial and/or written essay
- Art with audio or text narrative
- Dance performance
- Letter to self or others

Please keep all expressions to three minutes or less

Send to [nobidainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nobidainfo@gmail.com)

OR

Northern Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia Association  
P.O. Box 43611  
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

Application Deadline: February 29, 2012. Scholarship winners will be notified the following week.





# The Jean Armus Scholarship Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address, City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home/daytime phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you hold any professional certifications that pertain to the treatment of dyslexia?

2. What is your profession?

3. Are you currently employed?

4. Are you a parent of a child with dyslexia?

5. Are you a member of IDA?

6. Have you ever attended the NOBIDA symposium in the past?

7. Have you ever attended a national conference of IDA?

8. How long have you been interested in dyslexia?

9. How do you see yourself using the knowledge you will gain at the symposium?

10. What is the possibility of your sharing what you will experience at the symposium?

**Application Deadline: February 24, 2012.**

Scholarship winners will be notified the following week. Send to [nobidainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nobidainfo@gmail.com)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## HOW TO CONTACT NOBIDA

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Northern Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia Association  
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Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143  
Branch Voice Mail: 216-556-0883  
Email: [nobidainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nobidainfo@gmail.com)  
[www.nobida.org](http://www.nobida.org)

## BOARD MEETING DATES

January 26, 2012, 7:00 pm at Avon Lake Public Library  
May 3, 2012  
September 27, 2012  
November 29, 2012



Did you know that you can help the cause of dyslexia by designating a yearly United Way donation to the NOBIDA? Simply list the Northern Ohio Branch of the International Dyslexia on your pledge form. Join the effort to support education, teacher training, research, and services for individuals with dyslexia. Pledge today!

### Did You Know . . . ?

NOBIDA has a directory of service providers?

If you need the services of a person or team to diagnose dyslexia, we can help.

If you need the services of an educational therapist or tutor for a child or an adult with dyslexia, we can help.

If you want to be listed in the Directory of Providers for Educational Services, we can help. If you have been trained to provide Orton-Gillingham based, multisensory instruction and want to be listed in the Directory, please call the NOBIDA voice mail (216)556-0883 or email [info@nobida.org](mailto:info@nobida.org) or [nobidainfo@gmail.com](mailto:nobidainfo@gmail.com) and request an application to be listed in the Directory. Allied service providers, such as speech-language pathologists, educational psychologists, and others are welcome.

## The Northern Ohio Branch Mission Statement

The International Dyslexia Association is an international organization that concerns itself with the complex issues of dyslexia. The IDA membership consists of a variety of professionals in partnership with dyslexics and their families. We believe all individuals have the right to achieve their potential, that individual learning abilities can be strengthened and that social, educational and cultural barriers to language acquisition and use must be removed. The IDA actively promotes effective teaching approaches and related clinical educational intervention strategies for dyslexics. We support and encourage interdisciplinary study and research. We facilitate the exploration of the causes and early identification of dyslexia and are committed to the responsible and wide dissemination of research based knowledge.





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

- January 26, 2012** NOBIDA Board Meeting
- March 8, 2012** Dyslexia Symposium Dinner, Bertram Inn & Conference Center
- March 9, 2012** NOBIDA Dyslexia Symposium, Bertram Inn & Conference Center
- May 3, 2012** NOBIDA Board Meeting
- Summer 2012** NOBIDA Summer Workshops-TBA
- October 3, 2012** Dyslexia Simulation
- October 21, 2012** 2nd Annual Dyslexia Dash

Save the Date: March 9, 2012



Gordon Sherman



Dee Rosenberg

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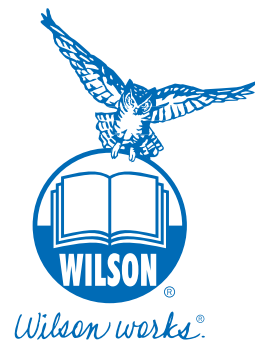
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