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Susan Scollie: Teacher, Researcher, and Friend

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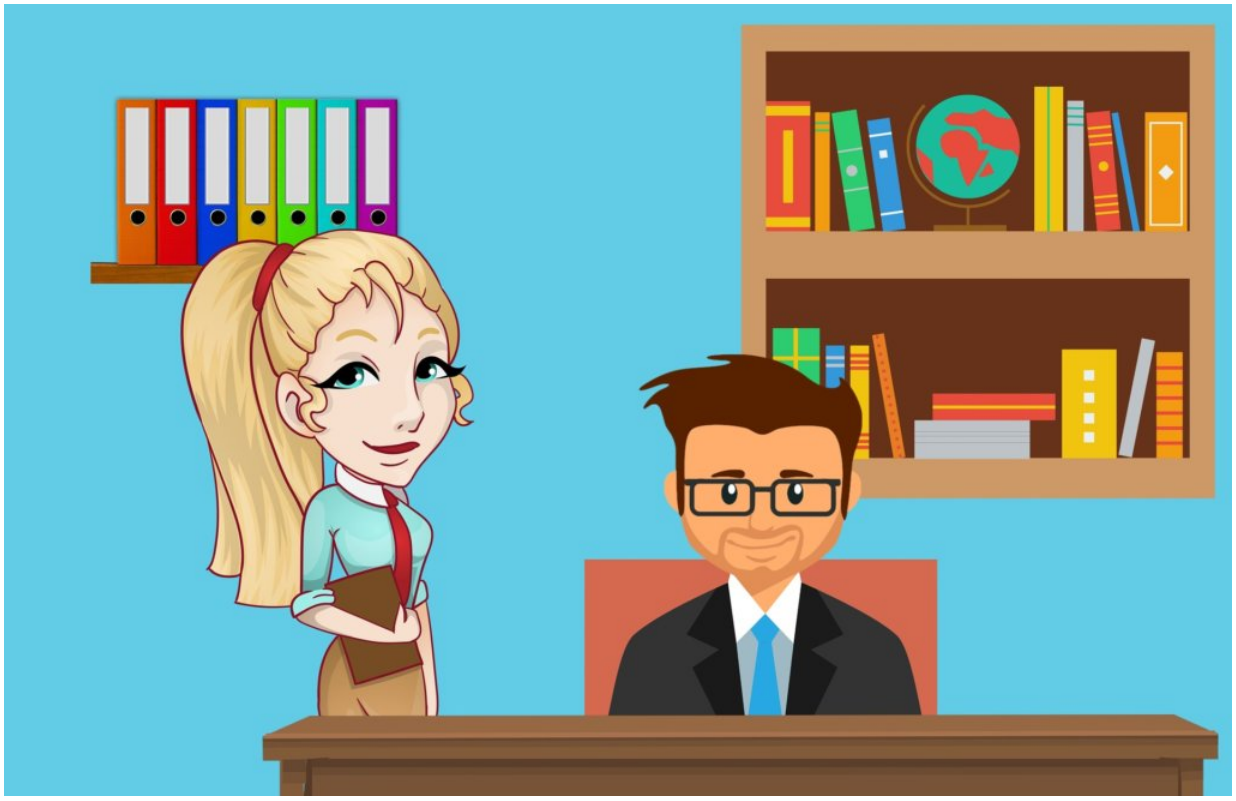

Susan Scollie is a pillar in the field of audiology. Whether you are a UWO-audiology graduate of recent memory, a practicing audiologist specializing in pediatric care, or another researcher in our field, it's no secret that Susan is a force to be reckoned with. You might have taken her courses in hearing aids. You might also be familiar with her work on the Desired Sensation Level (DSL) prescription formula. I had the privilege of having Susan as my PhD co-mentor. When I attend audiology events and tell colleagues that Susan was my mentor, our professional network suddenly shrinks by at least 2 to 3 degrees of separation.

I first met Susan as a first-year student in UWOs combined MClSc/PhD audiology program, where she was my professor for pediatric audiology and amplification. In terms of research, Susan Scollie and Ewan Macpherson formed my supervisory dream team, where I could leverage their knowledge in psychoacoustics and hearing aids to answer questions about hearing and music. In this capacity I had the privilege of getting to know Susan on a more personal level.

Nothing is more important to Susan than her students. Susan's illustrious career of contributions and recognitions comes a far second to her gratitude that she has passed on knowledge to up-and-coming audiologists. For example, a quick visit to her Twitter page will reveal retweets of

students' first RECD measurements or calibrations of clinical systems. As an instructor, Susan always ensures her courses create the best clinical decision-makers. Finally, as a research mentor, Susan ensures that any project (home-grown or collaborative) creates opportunities for research trainees to be involved.

Like my mentors, Susan and Ewan equipped me with skills to succeed as an audiology researcher. In my earlier years at UWO, they supported me in publishing two first-authored papers on clinical methods (i.e., probe tube placements and RECD methods; Vaisberg et al., 2016; Vaisberg et al., 2018), all to improve my clinical skills, improving my statistical chops, and dealing with the highs and lows of the peer-review process. However, when it came to my dissertation, Susan and Ewan guided me in building my programming skills, research design skills, scientific writing, and applying clinical questions in scientifically meaningful ways, all while learning about the impacts of hearing loss/hearing aid use on music sound quality (Vaisberg et al., 2021a; Vaisberg et al., 2021b; Vaisberg, Martindale, et al., 2018). With their mentorship, I also had the chance to gain exposure to the greater audiology/hearing community through internships and conference attendance. Her other mentees, past and present, are a testament to her love for teaching.

Figure 1: Susan Scollie, PhD (left), Jonathan Vaisberg, PhD (middle), and Ewan Macpherson, PhD (right), following Jonathan's PhD defense at University of Western Ontario in April 2019.

To be the teacher Susan is, one needs a great deal of knowledge to teach – and there is no shortage of knowledge in Susan's arsenal. She produces many articles every year, among the most frequently cited in our field (perhaps the most well-known being her DSL v5.0 publication; Scollie et al., 2005). She is also an opinion leader, having served (and continuing to serve) on advisory and steering committees in academia and industry. She has no shortage of recognitions either, receiving the UWO award for technology-enhanced teaching, Richard Seewald Career Award, and Marion

Downs Award in Pediatrics, to name a few. Most recently, she (and the team) are the recipients of one of Canada's highest honours, the Governor General's Innovation Award, for their work on DSL. Her resume speaks for itself.

Most importantly, I am thankful to have Susan as a friend. In between all the business, we have always been able to unwind by sharing meal recipes, talking about our dogs, or me getting unsolicited parenting or homeowner tips. I look forward to many more collegial and friendly interactions in the future!

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