



Podcast for the Aspiring SLP Launched: 'Sunshine Speechie'

By nicespeechlady.com / May 12, 2020 / [Edit post](#)

Nice Speech Lady has had the benefit of meeting Nancy Hillman, who has the "Sunshine Speechie Podcast," which targets the aspiring speech pathologist all along the road from applying the graduate school and beyond. Nice Speech Lady encourages readers to pass along this podcast information to any undergraduate SLP students, or others who are anywhere in the process of being interested in entering the field of study.

Please see the written interview exchange below.

- Please describe what lead you to wanting to launch a podcast?

"In my undergraduate, I started a pre-speech student organization through my university. My college did not have a speech program or any COMD courses, so I had very limited resources when it came to learning about the SLP field. By the time I graduated, my student organization had almost 200 members! I was absolutely shocked by how many people were interested in the career and by how many people truly benefited from our club's resources. I was able to make so many great connections and made some of my best friends through running the club. After graduating, I really missed mentoring the other pre-speech students, and I wondered how many other people out there are currently in the position I was of being totally overwhelmed and lost in the process of applying to SLP graduate schools. It was around that time I decided to start my podcast."

- What roadblocks did you face along the way in initiating the process, and how did you overcome them?

In terms of initiating the podcast process, it was definitely very difficult to understand the technological side of ensuring your podcast qualifies to be featured on all podcast streaming platforms. However, I think the biggest roadblock has been finding my audience. I know that there are hundreds if not thousands of students out there currently hoping to become SLP's, but it's very difficult to reach them. I think my marketing and social media experience has definitely helped me. I've worked for several companies in the past with their social media content (i.e. Victoria's Secret and Vera Bradley), so I've tried to transfer the skills I've learned through working with them into my own Instagram page. In addition, I've created a website and am currently working on a Youtube Channel so that I can reach a different demographic of potential listeners as well.

- What is your mission, in a nutshell, with the podcast?

"My mission with my podcast is to, in essence, 'leave no aspiring SLP behind.' I think it's really easy to become overwhelmed with the process and requirements and stress of applying to SLP graduate schools. Not to mention, SLP programs just keep getting more and more competitive! My hope is that through my resources I can reach those individuals who are feeling lost or like they don't have what it takes, and show them that it is possible to pursue their dreams!"



- What has been the most surprising aspect of starting the podcast?

"The most surprising aspect of starting my podcast so far has definitely been the positive feedback. I definitely was hoping to get a lot of listeners and positive reviews, but I definitely didn't expect the amount of people who have contacted me directly to share how my content has touched them or helped them. I honestly don't know if I would've become as invested in my podcast, etc., if I hadn't had so many people reaching out to me telling me what a difference I've made in their process. Without that kind of feedback sometimes it just feels like I'm talking to myself! So that definitely has been a huge surprise and a huge motivator for me."

- Please take a moment to describe why it would benefit students to listen in to your podcast?

"There are a lot of reasons for students to listen to my podcast. The first reason I think is that I say everything how it is! I personally hate when people are kind of skirting around the point of sharing a lot of pointless information and never getting to substantial content. That's why I try and be as truthful and forthright as possible (even if it can be a little intimidating!). That's why I share all of the information from my own SLP journey in addition to what I've learned. I'm honest when it comes to what future students will have to do, and the scores they'll need to get into graduate school. That's the reason I have all my GRE scores public on my Instagram. GRE scores are a touchy subject with a lot of people, and I honestly haven't seen anyone else willing to share their exact scores. It's also the reason I shared my rejection letter from UNC on my Instagram and I shared how painful that rejection was. I think a lot of times, especially when it comes to social media people like to only share the positive or flattering parts of themselves. I actually noticed after I posted my rejection letter that a couple other pre-SLP accounts shared theirs which was a really powerful moment! I also am just so close to the process, I applied this year so all of the information I share about SLP grad schools is very up-to-date. And I know exactly what resources future SLP's need to succeed whether it's my GRE tips or my advice on personal statements."

- What sort of feedback have you received?

"As I mentioned above, I've received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback! I think the most touching message I've received so far though was about my 'Choosing a Program' episode. I had someone message me telling me that the episode brought them to tears when I talked about how important it is to listen to yourself and pay attention to what's important to you even if you're reasoning or choosing a program may seem trivial in someone else's eyes. Because at the end of the day what's important to you is important to you! She told me she was really struggling to choose a program and hearing me share that advice was exactly what she needed to hear. Her feedback actually brought me to tears! I just couldn't believe that I had been able to have such an impact on someone."

- How do you see your podcast evolving over time as you progress in your program?

"My podcast has already evolved even over only a few episodes! My podcast started out with just me speaking and sharing my advice, and now I'm shifting over to more of a host-guest type of format. I definitely see my podcast evolving from where it is now about getting into graduate school to being about surviving graduate school and eventually my CF and being a good SLP. I also hope to start interviewing more current SLPs especially those who are experts in their field. I'm also planning a 'setting series' over several episodes where I'll interview SLPs in all different settings and get their insight about the pro's and con's of working that setting as well as what everyday life is like. No matter where my podcast leads I



definitely still want to continue supporting future SLP's who are applying to graduate school, so I'll definitely keep that up. I'm honestly just so excited for what I can do with the podcast though, I already have a million ideas for future episodes!"

- What makes you strategically positioned to product the podcast at this time?

"As I mentioned before, I'm currently in the thick of starting graduate school and finishing the application process, so my experience is definitely still fresh in my mind. In addition, the COVID-19 quarantine has given me ample time to pursue launching the podcast and all my creative outlets. I lost my part-time job as a remote data analyst as a result of COVID-19, so I never have to feel guilty that I'm not working or putting in extra hours, which is how I used to fill my time."

- What sort of professionals in the field have you been able to meet along the way so far?

"I've honestly been able to make so many connections over a short span of time through my platform. I've connected a lot with SLP's who are prominent on Instagram. In addition, I've been able to talk to Venita Litvack from the 'Speechie Side Up' podcast which has been super helpful."

- How often do you produce the podcast?

"I currently produce my podcast so that it's released every other Wednesday. I chose that because I figured creating a new episode every single week would just be way too difficult as I head into graduate school. However, I am hoping to throw in a couple bonus episodes here and there. Right now since I'm in quarantine indefinitely and home for the summer I've just been recording as many episodes as possible for future dates so that I have a bunch of content ready to go for when my life gets busy again."

- A lot of Nice Speech Lady readers are already SLPs, so they might suggest your podcast to students shadowing, or people they meet who are interested in the field and want to learn more from a "peer perspective." What would you say would be the most beneficial thing about your podcast?

"My podcast is definitely the only one out there so far that's specifically geared towards helping students get into SLP graduate school, and just help beginners understand the field, so it's definitely helpful to an audience of students or newcomers. In addition, I really just share every resource possible that could help someone get into graduate school or prepare for becoming a speech language pathologist. In addition, as I mentioned before I definitely don't try and sugar-coat things."

- What area of speech pathology are you wanting to go into?

"I'm honestly unsure of what area of Speech Pathology I want to go into yet, there's so many great options! I'm definitely torn between working with adults and children because I've loved both populations that I've shadowed with. I'm definitely leaning towards an either inpatient or outpatient medical setting though as I really enjoy the great variety of disorders seen. I also absolutely loved all the shadowing I did with patients suffering from traumatic brain injuries, so anything really dealing with those cognitive-neural functions would be amazing!"

- What made you want to become an SLP?

"I saw an SLP when I was young because of my severe malocclusion that made it impossible for me to close my lips, and of course my SLP was an amazing person! I also was inspired just because my Mom is



a sped teacher and absolutely loved every single SLP she worked with and was fascinated by what they did. I first shadowed a school SLP in high school and was almost sold on the career but had a couple qualms just because I don't really like the school setting or articulation. It wasn't until I started shadowing med SLP's that I knew for certain it was what I wanted to do."

- What are your long-term goals?

"One of my long term goals is definitely to leave an impact on the field of Speech Language Pathology in a meaningful and positive way. I also love research, at least for now, so I definitely want to continue some form of research after leaving school. In addition, I'd love to be a lecturer at a university and teach classes just because I feel like it would be something I'd really enjoy. Honestly, I'm very open right now though, I think I'll be able to better solidify my goals once I'm in graduate school and can really solidify what I want my career path to be.:

- How can Nice Speech Lady assist you?

"You definitely are already assisting me by featuring my podcast on your platform! In addition I can't wait to use your free resources from your website as I start my clinicals and start being able to treat patients. I honestly am going to try and go through as many resources as possible on your website now so I can learn as much as possible about Speech Pathology before I start my graduate program in the fall!"





Bekah Wilson Nice, M.A., CCC-SLP, is the owner nicespeechlady.com. Nice created a platform for medical SLPs to have free access to practical clinical resources on Nice Speech Lady; she also enjoys blogging and writing news articles on medical SLP issues. Nice also works full-time as a home health SLP.

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