

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Fontbonne University Expands Program to Meet Rising Demand for Speech Language Pathologists with New Language Clinic and Graduate Student Preparation Program in St. Paul, Minnesota

September 22, 2022, St. Louis, Mo. – To meet the increasing demand for speech-language pathologists, [Fontbonne University](#) is opening a graduate distance education program at St. Catherine’s University (St. Kate’s) in St. Paul, Minn. in January 2023. Part of the program will include a speech and language clinic in the community, offering free evaluation and treatment of a wide variety of developmental and acquired communication disorders. The clinic will also allow graduate students in Fontbonne’s [Department of Communication Disorders and Deaf Education](#) (CDDE) to gain hands-on training. Applications for enrollment in the January 2023 and August 2023 cohorts of the distance education graduate program are open.

The demand for speech-language pathologies is being driven by factors at both ends of the age spectrum. These include the growing population of older adults requiring therapy services related to strokes and dementia that result in speech, language and swallowing problems, as well as early identification and diagnosis of hearing, speech, language and swallowing disorders in young children.

Fontbonne University’s accredited Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program prepares dynamic clinicians to work collaboratively in a wide variety of settings. This Fontbonne University distance education program will bring speech-language pathology preparation to the robust menu of allied health disciplines already offered at St. Catherine’s University, with opportunities for [interprofessional education and practice](#) across related disciplines such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, or social work.

“At Fontbonne, we believe it’s essential to provide a variety of clinical experiences for our students because the scope of practice for the speech-language pathology profession is very broad,” said Dr. Gale Rice, professor and dean of the college of education and allied health professions. “The new Speech and Language Clinic will permit students to gain essential experience working with many different patients, enabling them to acquire a wide range of skills while providing quality care under the supervision of experienced faculty supervisors.”

Fontbonne has been providing speech, language and hearing services in St. Louis for more than 50 years. In 2021, Fontbonne expanded clinical services to the Kansas City, MO region through the launch of a free university clinic on the Avila University campus. Now, the expansion to St. Paul through the partnership with St. Catherine’s University, will allow the university to administer care to more individuals with communication disorders while also giving additional students the opportunity to obtain a [master’s degree in speech-language pathology](#) from Fontbonne.

-more-

Page 2 – Fontbonne University Plans for a New Speech and Language Clinic and Graduate Student Preparation Program in St. Paul, Minn.

“It’s exciting to partner with another ACSSJ institution to deliver one of Fontbonne’s signature programs,” said Fontbonne University President Dr. Nancy Blattner. “We are delighted to work with St. Kate’s to offer our graduate speech language pathology program and to provide free clinical services to benefit children and adults in the greater St. Paul-Minneapolis community.”

“With nationally recognized faculty, alumni who are major contributors in the field, and a history of earning more than \$15 million in federal grants, we typically receive more applications than we are able to accept due only to a lack of capacity,” Dr. Rice said. “Expanding to St. Paul ensures more qualified students are able to receive a Fontbonne education.”

Prospective students interested in the graduate program should contact Program Director, Dr. Carmen Russell crussell@fontbonne.edu. Speech-language pathology clinicians and faculty interested in joining our team, seeking more information, and interested in community partnerships are welcome to inquire with Department Chair, Dr. Jenna Voss at jvoss@fontbonne.edu. Individuals interested in joining a waitlist for child or adult evaluation or treatment can learn more [online](#).

About Fontbonne University

Fontbonne University is a private, Catholic liberal arts university located in St. Louis, Missouri, committed to a transformative education and inspiring students to become global citizens who think critically and act ethically to create a more just world. Currently celebrating its Centennial, the university was founded in 1923 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. For more information, visit www.fontbonne.edu.

About St. Catherine University

Sustained by a legacy of visionary women, St. Catherine University educates women to lead and influence. We are a diverse community of learners dedicated to academic rigor, core Catholic values, and a heartfelt commitment to social justice. St. Kate’s offers degrees at all levels in the humanities, arts, sciences, healthcare, and business fields that engage women in uncovering positive ways of transforming the world. St. Kate’s students learn and discern wisely, and live and lead justly — all to power lives of meaning. Discover more at stkate.edu.

###