Announcer: The Missouri State Journal, a weekly program keeping you in touch with Missouri State University.

Emily Yeap: At Missouri State University, the Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders provides hands-on learning opportunities to MSU students enrolled in speech language pathology and audiology programs. It also offers a full range of diagnostic, treatment and education services for people with speech language and hearing disorders of all ages. I'm Emily Yeap.

Joining me today to highlight the clinic's audiology services and Missouri State's audiology program are three individuals: clinical associate professors of audiology Dr. Sarah Jones and Dr. Sarah Barber, and Doctor of Audiology student Brooke Byler. Jones.

Sarah Jones: The Missouri State University Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic is located here on campus in the Ann Kampeter Sciences Hall. We offer services to not only the students, the faculty members on campus, but extend those services to members of the community. We see a lot of patients within the Springfield area and beyond.

The services specific to audiology that we offer are hearing evaluations, balance assessments. We do dispense and fit hearing aids. We conduct auditory processing evaluations. We do a realm of diagnostic assessments and also implement treatment plans for our patients in the clinic.

Emily Yeap: Clinic staff and graduate students also do community outreach, according to Barber.

Sarah Barber: We'll take the students into the community and do various screenings. We will work with Springfield Public Schools in the school system to see those children that are deaf and hard of hearing. We also will go to churches and help with screening of their members. We also participate with the Boys and Girls Club, and we will do screenings on those children as well. Here on campus, we do the pre-kindergarten screenings at Greenwood.

Emily Yeap: Clinic services are free. They cover consultations, evaluations and testing, and routine hearing aid checks and cleans, among others. There are costs involved for patients who need products like hearing aids. Barber explains how to obtain services.

Sarah Barber: When a patient is interested in seeking services with us, sometimes that comes in the form of a physician referral, but they can self-refer. They can contact the Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic and just say they would like to be seen. We take an intake and get them on the schedule. We are open to the community, not just on-campus community.

Emily Yeap: Student Byler shares her experience with the clinic and program.

Brooke Byler: The Missouri State clinic is really unique because we get to interact with the Springfield community from the very first day we're on campus. That was really appealing to me as a student, because I know that I would learn more that way. It's just been really exciting, kind of building a relationship with the community through our services and being able to help them in that way. We do pretty much all of the testing. We have a preceptor in the room with us the entire time, which is great for questions, guidance. All of the testing will be done by students, which has helped me in this learning process tremendously.

Another thing that I like about the program is our class size is pretty small. There's only about 11 of us in our cohort, which has been great because we have a really good relationship with our preceptors and they know our names, they know our learning styles, they know how we are in the clinic. I think, overall, that's going to make me a better audiologist.

Emily Yeap: Barber explains how students are matched with their skill level.

Sarah Barber: At the beginning, they have very basic skills that they have learned and we work with them through the program. As they acquire more knowledge in their classes, we're able to put that into play in the clinic then. As they learn about hearing aids, they start to see hearing aid patients. As they learn about auditory processing, they start to see auditory processing patients. We work with them at a level of which they should be. If someone's having difficulty, then we give them a little more emphasis in that area to build up those skills.

Emily Yeap: Jones stresses that community involvement for the students is key.

Sarah Jones: To encourage our student involvement in addition to our onsite or potentially offsite clinical rotations that they will be assigned, again, relating back to what we discussed before, we try and engage in as much community involvement as we can.

On a regular basis, we are involved with Healthy Hearing as part of Special Olympics. We may travel up to Jeff City or Columbia, Missouri, or maybe even the games could be taking place right here in Springfield. We like to get the students involved in that so that there is an exposure to diverse patient populations. We do like to promote involvement, pediatrics, adults and a lot of different other aspects related to the patient.

Emily Yeap: To find out more about the Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic at MSU, visit missouristate.edu/csd/clinic. I'm Emily Yeap for the Missouri State Journal.

Speaker 1: For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Communication at 417-836-6397. The Missouri State Journal is available online at ksmu.org.