

Dianna Balan

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Undergraduate Student Gains New Perspective and Inspiration at Professional Conference

As an undergraduate student, **Dianna Balan** attended her first professional conference in November and not only learned more about her field of study but was inspired by real-life stories that would solidify her reasons for pursuing a career in Communication Disorders and Sciences.

On Friday, Nov. 15, Dianna arrived in Chicago for the 2013 American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Convention. As part of the convention, she made plans to attend one of the luncheons offered as the cost was only \$5 and fit nicely in her student budget. Dianna was pleasantly surprised when she arrived to find a formal dining experience, amazing food, and an inspiring story of perseverance by Bob Love, former NBA player with the Chicago Bulls. Mr. Love shared about his successes and also his challenges as he was passed over for opportunities because of severe stuttering. **His story of perseverance** and about those who helped him through speech therapy as an adult **gave new meaning and a real-life inspiration to Dianna as she prepares for her career.** She left the convention with LOTS of information and a renewed zeal for making a difference through her field of study.



Dianna and former NBA player Bob Love

As Dianna prepares to graduate in May and go on to graduate school, **she will always be grateful for investing in professional development as an undergraduate student.** Not only did the convention inspire her but the formal luncheon provided opportunity for her to put the proper dinner etiquette to good use that she had learned the week prior during the Adult Student Recognition Week's *Finding the Salad Fork* program.

Congratulations Dianna! Your future is bright.