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PRESS RELEASE

Planet Word Museum and ASHA Announce New Digital Exhibit on Word-Finding Problems Like Aphasia *Announcement Coincides with National Aphasia Awareness Month*

(Rockville, MD—June 6, 2022) Planet Word and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association announced today the launch of a new collaborative digital exhibit spotlighting word-finding problems.

Through voice-activated “beacons,” visitors learn how and why word-finding challenges occur, ranging from the “tip of the tongue” phenomenon many people experience occasionally, to aphasia, a language disorder that can dramatically reroute word finding in the brain. Aphasia has recently been in the headlines after the family of actor Bruce Willis announced he has been diagnosed with the disorder.

Besides explaining aphasia and its impact, the beacon covers a variety of other ways people can struggle to find words, how speech-language pathologists support people’s ability to communicate, and how the public can help friends and loved ones experiencing difficulties. The beacon itself communicates through illustrative photos, videos, and graphics designed for people of all ages.

“Language is what connects us. When people are affected by word-finding problems, like aphasia, it’s not only frustrating but isolating,” said Ann Friedman Founder and CEO of Planet Word. “Working with ASHA on this beacon will help our visitors better understand these disorders. We also hope it will provide tools to help families and their loved ones stay connected as they navigate a new reality.”

“We appreciate the opportunity to collaborate with Planet Word,” said ASHA President Judy Rich, EdD, CCC-SLP, BCS-CL. “For us, it marks an exciting new way to educate the public about communication, one that aligns with how Americans increasingly receive information.”

The new word-finding beacon is located in the museum’s Words Matter gallery.

Planet Word prides itself on being the only museum in the country “dedicated to renewing and inspiring a love of words and language.” It occupies the entire five story historic Franklin School building at 13th and K Streets NW in downtown Washington, D.C. Visitors and reviewers alike have lauded the Museum ever since it opened in 2020.

“As we observe National Aphasia Awareness Month,” ASHA President Rich added, “I encourage the public to visit Planet Word and the new beacon. Doing both would be a great way to be informed and reminded of how vital communication is to life.”

For more info about ASHA visit: www.asha.org
For more info about Planet Word visit: www.planetwordmuseum.org.

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