

CONGRATULATIONS

# “AMPLIFYING VOICES MINIGRANT”

**Adjunct Professor McNamara applied for and was awarded the “Amplifying Voices MiniGrant” through the U.S. Society for Augmentative-Alternative Communication (USSAAC), which is being used in the Sped 332 class.**

According to Prof. McNamara, the goal is twofold:

1. prepare SPED 332 students to be supportive and effective communication partners in their future endeavors as educators by learning what they can do to support people who use AAC in regular interactions
2. prioritize the voices people who use AAC as the experts in their own needs and authorities in the training and preparation of pre-service professionals who want to work with the disability community

Each student will be paired w/ an AAC expert through USSAAC's Speaker Connection, and participate in a virtual interaction where:

- students and AAC experts get to know one another
- students gain experience as communication partners with people who use AAC
- AAC experts will counsel students on how they can be effective and supportive communication partners in their future roles as educators

Following these virtual interactions, each student will compose a reflection based on their experience, including at least 3 pieces of advice for educators on how to be good communication partners. Then, 'lessons learned' will be compiled into a Communication Partner Guide (PDF) that both students and AAC experts can take w/ them for their futures.

**To learn more about AAC resources and to get to know some of these amazing people, check out the website and their profiles [here](#)!**